

THE STORY
OF
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, ACADEMIC GYMNASIUM, PRAHA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CZECH
BY
MARIE J. KOHNOVÁ, PH. D.

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CHAPTER I.

Prehistoric Times.

Introduction.

Man likes to learn about the past. The customs of people who lived before our times — how they dwelt and dressed, what they ate, how they worked and fought, what they suffered for, their religion and the subjects of their thoughts, in short, their lives, form the material of a fascinating study, the science of history. History deals with the life of the human race and the development of civilization from the time that people learnt how to write and left us written documents of their existence. About six thousand years have passed away since writing was first invented, and these years constitute historical times.

We divide historical times into two periods: the ages before the birth of Christ, (B. C. = Before Christ), and the ages after the birth of Christ, (A. D. = Anno Domini, In the year of the Lord). The time between the years 1 and 100 is called the first century, between the years 101 and 200 is the second century; similarly, the tenth century lasted from 901 to 1000, the nineteenth century from 1801 to 1900. The ages in which people did not know how to write are called prehistoric times.

The aspect of the earth's surface is constantly changing. There was a time when the lands that today form Czechoslovakia were at the bottom of a great ocean. This ocean disappeared only

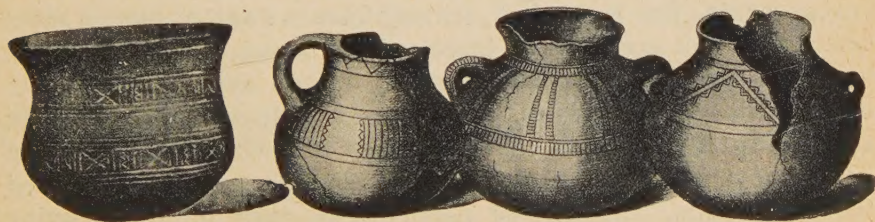


Fig. 1. Specimens of ancient pottery.

gradually, leaving large swamps behind. Giant trees grew on their banks. Uprooted by winds or hurricanes or falling from age, they found their graves in the swamps, where by a natural process, lasting countless centuries, they were changed into coal. The climate suddenly became cold: the Ice Age arrived. Fields of ice covered all Northern Europe, extending even into Czech lands. All life here

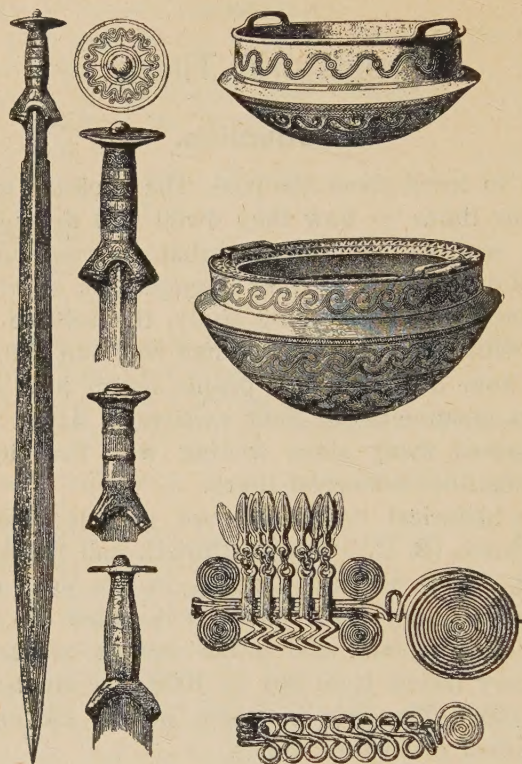


Fig. 2. Arms and ornaments from the Bronze Age.

disappeared. Only after many thousands of years did the climate change [again]. The ice melted, leaving here a swamp, there a plain where only tall grass grew, there a leafy forest. These last were inhabited by elephants, rhinoceroses, bears, hyenas, and many other kinds of wild beasts. In the wake of these creatures there appeared in Czech lands the first man. It is claimed that human beings have been living on our earth for the past one hundred thousand years. The earliest people were very primitive, living almost like the wild beasts around them. They sought shelter in

the tree-tops or in caves, eating the raw meat of their prey. They fought with their hands, finger-nails, and teeth, as well as with sticks and stones.

How the prehistoric inhabitants of the Czechoslovak state lived we learn only from the relics that have been preserved: by the bones of beasts, and of people who were later buried in regular burial grounds, where we find their crouching skeletons or urns containing their ashes; by remains of their fire-places, their food, grain, and clothing (of skin, flax, wool, grasses); by various implements and weapons (of stone, later of bronze, copper, and iron); by various ornaments of teeth and shells, and by their jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, and ear-rings).

The scientists who study prehistoric life and relics are called archeologists. They divide the ages of prehistoric man according to the material he used for making his implements, weapons, and ornaments, into the Ages of Stone, of Bronze, of Iron; each of these ages is in turn subdivided into two parts, for example, the Old Stone Age and the New Stone Age, which are distinguished from each other by the degree of skill with which their products were made.

Relics of all these ages have been found on Czechoslovak soil. It is impossible to determine, however, how the prehistoric people in these lands spoke or to what race they belonged. These relics are deposited for the most part in the National Museum at Praha, and in the museums of various cities and towns in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia.



Fig. 3. A prehistoric grave.

The Oldest Known Inhabitants of Czechoslovakia.

The Celts. So far as we know, the Celts were the first people to settle in the lands that today form the state of Czechoslovakia. They came from the West, from their homeland, Gaul, that is,

from the land which today constitutes France and Western Germany. Thus they were the ancestors of the French nation. The Celts who settled in Bohemia were called the Boians; their new country received the name *Bojhemum*, *Bojohemum*, *Bohemia*, which it has kept, in various forms, ever since. The Cotinians were that branch of the Celts which settled in Moravia and in the sections of Slovakia which are rich in iron ore.

The Boians and the Cotinians were not left to themselves for long. Marauding bands of Germans soon attacked them. In the ensuing struggles with the invaders, the ranks of the Celts were gradually thinned. Many were killed, others were assimilated by the incoming Germanic population, until all traces of the Boians and of the Cotinians were wiped out.

The Marcomanni. In the first century of the Christian era, the Germanic tribe, the Marcomanni, settled in Bohemia, while a kindred tribe, the Quadi, (which means "the wicked"), established itself in Moravia and Western Slovakia. Led by their chief *Marobud*, the Marcomanni founded a powerful kingdom, with the town *Marobudum* as its capital. Disputes, however, soon broke out among them. *Marobud* lost his throne, and was forced to seek safety in the Roman Empire, which at that time included the whole of Southern Europe.

The Marcomanni in time occupied Slovakia, and thus became neighbours of Rome, for the boundaries of the Roman Empire stretched beyond the Danube. In these parts a series of long, bloody wars broke out between the Marcomanni and the Romans. The great Roman Emperor, *Marcus Aurelius*, defended his empire against the Marcomanni and the Quadi in the years 173—180 A. D. The successful efforts of Rome to keep its outposts continued, off and on, for three centuries; the struggle involved not only the Marcomanni and the Quadi, but other Germanic tribes especially the Goth, as well. Rome, though successful, was greatly weakened by the strain. In order to put up a stronger defence against its enemies, the Roman Empire split into two parts: the Western Empire, with its centre in the city of Rome, and the Eastern Empire, with its capital Constantinople.* The latter survived for a thousand

* The division between the East and the West had been prepared by a centuries-old drifting apart in political interests, in economic problems, in language, and in the interpretation of Christianity.

years, but the former soon fell: after the year 476 A. D., Rome became the victim of Germanic tribes.

The Germans conquered Rome; but it would be a mistake to suppose that all the Germanic tribes remained strong. While they were fighting civilized Rome, they were also fighting each other. Some tribes, coming under Roman influence, lost their own identity and became, in a measure, Roman; others disappeared, since their conquerors, though related to them, killed them or assimilated them completely. Thus the Marcomanni and the Quadi themselves lost their tribal individuality in the presence of other tribes, suffering in turn the same fate to which they had formerly condemned the Boians and the Cotinians. For a time, their place in the Czechoslovak lands was taken by the Lombards (Lombardi).

The Great Migrations. The first five centuries of the Christian era were times of instability, of the wanderings of the nations. The chief cause of the upheavals that took place was the invasion of Europe by a fierce Turko-Tartar tribe, the Huns. The invaders pushed the Germanic tribes living on the shores of the Black Sea from their homes, forcing them to flee to the Roman Empire. A wide-spread migration began: one tribe forced out another, one people drove out another, until storm and struggle swept over the whole of Europe.

For a time the Huns settled between the Danube and the Tisza Rivers. Their kingdom was mighty, but of short duration. Upon the death of their king, Attila, "the Scourge of God", (A. D. 453) it fell to pieces, and the Huns disappeared from the neighbourhood.

We have seen that the Czechoslovak lands passed through two stages of settlement: the Celtic and the Germanic. The third great people who established themselves in Czechoslovakia were the Slavs. They came to stay: their home in these lands has proved permanent.

The Slavs in Prehistoric Times.

Characteristics of the Slavs. From time immemorial the Slavs lived in Eastern Europe, on the well-wooded but marshy land east of the Carpathian Mountains. They called themselves the Slavs, Slované, meaning people who understand each other's speech

(slovo = word). They called the Germans "Němci", (němý = dumb), in reference to the fact that they, the Slavs, did not understand the Germanic languages. Thus it has ever been in human history: man tends to look down on what is strange to him. As the Romans considered everybody a barbarian who lived outside the pale of their Empire, so the Slavs disregarded the language of the Germans, only because it was different from their own.

On the other hand, nation has always taught nation: the Germans, who had in many ways been the pupils of Rome, became in their turn the teachers of the Slavs. Even some words in the Slav languages are really of Germanic origin (for example, kníže (lord), kněz (priest), peníze (money), and many others.

The Slavs resembled the Germans in appearance. Tall, with fair hair and blue eyes, of light complexion, they were an imposing and attractive people. They were brave and hospitable, giving a cordial welcome to their guests. Fond of music, dancing, and festivals, they were "peaceful as doves" by nature, becoming warlike only in the presence of enemies. The early Slavs were a talented race, and not the least of their gifts was an ability to learn from their enemies, to adapt themselves, readily to accept what was good (and sometimes also what was bad) in other, more advanced civilizations. They had, on the other hand, the vices of a primitive people: they were sly and quarrelsome, credulous and superstitious.

Communal Life. The Slavs lived communally, being grouped in families. When a young man wished to get married, he carried off his bride, or paid a dowry to her father. Married sons remained with their parents and formed with them one united family group. Property was possessed by such a group as a whole, and all members enjoyed its benefits. No individual could say, "This is my pasture"; he was obliged to say, "This is our pasture". Such property was administered by the family's oldest member, or by an elected "mayor", who was also called "elder".

All men were not equal. (1) Social distinctions arose between families as some grew wealthier or gained greater renown in battle than others. (2) A family was free and independent: but if an individual was disobedient to family authority, or led a wicked life, he was expelled from his group. He lost his status of a "free-man", and became a "villain" ("wicked", "poor"). (3) Even worse off than the villains were the slaves; these people had reached

their unenviable position by having been taken prisoners in war. They differed from other men in appearance, for they wore their hair short and were clean-shaven.

Related families formed a tribe; the nobler and richer members elected a lord ("kníže"), who lived in a castle. Castles were built on hills or near rivers or swamps, that is, in places that the enemy would find difficult to attack in times of war. They were made not of stone, as in later days, but of wood.

Members of a family were obliged to take vengeance when their near relatives were wounded or killed, or when any wrong was done to them. The offender could, however, ward off the wrath of the avengers by paying a fine. The amount of the fine was in proportion to the social standing of the person who had been wronged. Often an entire family suffered for the crime of one of its members, and might even be ruined.

When a crime was committed, truth was established in two ways: by oath and by ordeal (judgment of God). In the ordeal of battle, for example, the two men fought a duel: the defeated one was considered guilty. In another kind of ordeal, the supposed culprit was obliged to walk bare-foot on red-hot iron. If he received no burns, or if these healed in a short time, he was declared innocent of the crime of which he had been accused.

Originally, the Slavs were hunters; later, they acquired domestic animals, and finally, when they began to cultivate the soil, they became farmers. In order that they might have arable soil, they cleared the land by chopping down the trees or by burning whole sections of the forest.*

The Slavs had many kinds of domestic animals: cattle and pigs, sheep and goats, and even poultry. The horse was probably kept by them even in those prehistoric times. Especially valuable helpers were their dogs. They also kept bees.

It was considered dishonourable for a Slav freeman to do agricultural labour. Women and slaves tilled the fields, using at first a wooden hook, later a stone hook, for ploughing, and finally an iron plough. They grew wheat, rye, barley and oats, millet, peas, lentils, and also flax.

* The names of some towns and villages remind us that they were built on land where formerly forests had stood: Mýto, (mýtiti — to clear), Seč, Proseč, Paseka, (vysekávati — to cut down, fell).

The chief foods of the early Slavs were vegetables and cereals. They ground their grain by hand, using two stones: laying it on the larger stone, which was flat, they crushed it with a smaller, sharper rock, until it was reduced to a coarse flour. Acquired thus laboriously, the flour was used for cakes and bread, which were baked in ovens. Porridge made of millet was also a favourite food. For sweetening it honey was used. From milk cheese was made. The Slavs drank milk, mead, and beer. This last was prepared from fermented barley and acorns.

The early Slavs were self-sufficient: they knew how to make for themselves everything that they needed. Of stone they made various weapons and implements such as axes; bone was used for others, such as arrows and needles. Barrels and baskets were made of wood. People drank from horns. As time went on and the Slavs learned by practice, cruder, more primitive articles gave way to more ingenious and attractive ones. The Slavs learned how to use bronze, copper, and iron, of which they made swords, axes, and saws. Even gold and silver were known to them, and fashioned into jewelry — bracelets, rings, ear-rings, and long pins. Besides, they manufactured clay pottery in great quantities: pots in which grain, milk, or water was kept, and urns in which were buried the ashes of the dead.

Originally, the Slavs clothed themselves in furs. It was only much later that they learned how to weave linen and woollen cloth, which they also embroidered and dyed. Women made the clothes for everybody. On their feet the people wore sandals made of leather or of wood. On their heads, the men wore fur-trimmed caps, the women wore veils: young girls went bare-headed.

Dwellings were of various kinds: at first the Slavs lived in caves, then in pits in the ground. Later still, huts were woven from the branches of trees, as one would weave a basket. Other cottages were of wood, over which was plastered a coat of mud. The Slavs possessed very little furniture. Instead of beds, they had piles of straw; instead of tables, they used low stools; when they ate, they lay on the floor.

The Slavs had their own markets and fairs, at which wax, honey, furs, cattle, and even slaves were bought and sold. Traders came from near and far, and they were given special protection, so that no harm could come to them. Originally, the verb "to sell"

meant "to barter", "to give in exchange". The Slavs paid in cattle; later, linen was used as a form of currency.*

The Religion of the Ancient Slavs. In ancient times, the Slavs were pagans. This means that they worshipped many gods: to represent these gods, they made small wooden figures, and then bowed down to them. They worshipped various striking phenomena of nature: thus, their chief deity was Perun, god of thunder and lightning; the oak tree was considered especially his, and was therefore sacred; Thursday, his day, was a holiday. Other powerful deities were the Sun-god, *Veles*, the protector of the flocks; and *Svarag*, god of fire. They prayed to the moon and the stars, and had faith in the gods of mountains, waters, and trees. They drowned the goddess of death, Morana (symbolic of winter), celebrated the coming of the deity of spring, and greeted the summer with fires, songs, and dances.

They believed that man has a soul, which, after death, leaves the body in the form of a bird. A good soul becomes a dove, and wings its way to heaven: a wicked soul becomes a black crow. Souls of the dead appear at night as phantom lights and will-o'-the-wisps or as ghosts and vampires, who come to torment the living in their sleep.

When a Slav died, he was buried or burned. In the latter case, the urn, bearing his ashes, was placed on a hill for the people to see; then, amid songs and rejoicing, it was covered with earth and rocks, which formed a mound. The size of the mound depended on the rank of the person whose ashes were buried beneath it. With the dead were buried those articles which they had been especially fond of in life. In honour of the dead celebrations (called „tryzny") were held. These consisted chiefly of warlike games, and were followed by a funeral feast.

The Slavs honoured the souls of their ancestors, which in time became their domestic gods. They called them „dědové", „dědkové", ("the old ones"), and considered them special protectors

* Historians have ascertained these particulars of the life of the early Slavs not only by studying their archeological remains, but also by comparing the various Slav languages, such as Czech, Russian, Polish, and Old Bulgarian. This study is called "comparative philology". If the word meaning "bread", for example, is similar in all these languages, it proves that bread was known in times when the Slavs all lived together and spoke a common language, that is, in prehistoric times; thus we can, to a certain extent, reconstruct their life.

and defenders of the household. The wooden figures which represented these ancestors were objects of special devotion.

From such a faith, it was only a step to belief in a mythical household snake of evil influence, in the Fates who determine the child's future, in fairies and nymphs, dwarfs and witches, wizards and sorcerers. Great was the fear of magic and of enchantments, and of those who pretended to understand them.

The Slavs on Czechoslovak Soil.

The Migrations of the Slavs. The Slavs formed such a large nation that their numbers seemed countless. Due to a scarcity of pasture-lands for their cattle, and due also to the pressure exerted on them by fierce Turko-Tartar tribes, they left their original homes on the east of the Carpathian Mountains. Some went eastwards towards Asia, others pushed westwards to the Elbe, and still others passed to the South of Europe, to the Balkans; some even went as far as the Alps.

The Slavs came to the lands which constitute present-day Czechoslovakia about 500 A.D. They probably came in contact with feeble remnants of the Boian tribes. At this early period, the Slavs had no written documents; therefore we know of their arrival and early history only from archeological sources, and from the wealth of fable and legend that has come down to us from these dark periods of history.

The Arrival of the Czechs: Legend of Our Country's Eponym. At a time which is lost in the dimness of the past, a hero named Čech led his followers across three great rivers into the land inhabited ever since by the Czechs, and called Bohemia, Čechy. It was indeed a land "flowing with milk and honey". The silence of its great forests was broken only by the bubbling of brooks, the buzzing of bees, the singing of birds, and the calls of wild horses and other beasts. Its clear waters were filled with large shoals of fish. The climate was pleasant.

Our ancestor Čech gazed inquiringly at the mountains and scrutinized the valleys. Climbing to the top of Mount Říp, he saw that the soil was good and fertile. Therefore, deciding to settle here, he joyfully placed the "dědky", the wooden images of his ancestors on the ground. Then he called to his people to name their new home. Unanimously they answered him, crying:

“What name more fitting for this country could be found, than thy name, O father! Since thou art Čech, let this land be called Čechy!”

Father Čech, deeply moved by the words of his followers, fell on his knees, and began kissing the ground in his joy. Then rising, with his hands stretched towards heaven, he cried :



Fig. 4. Říp.

“Accept us, O Land of our Destiny! Keep us safe and sound, and make our descendants multiply from generation to generation, for ever and ever!”

The Slav Tribes in Bohemia. Bohemia (Čechy) was not settled by the Slavs all at once, nor was it peopled by one tribe only, as the legend of Čech might lead us to believe. Different Slav tribes, coming at various times, settled here and there. The Czechs, whose name spread later to include all the Slavs of Bohemia, lived on and around Říp, and near the site of modern Praha. The Lemuzi established themselves on the banks of the river Bilina, while the Lučané founded their homes by the rivers Ohře and Mže : where the river Vltava (Moldau) flows into the Labe (Elbe), near to where

the town Mělník now stands, lived the Pšované, in the north-eastern part of Bohemia the Charvaté, and in Eastern Bohemia the Zličané. Moravia and Slovakia were likewise peopled by various Slav tribes.

The Western Neighbours of the Slavs. West of Bohemia stretched the empire of the Bavarians and that of the Franks. Both of these Germanic peoples were very warlike. In times of peace, they traded with the Slavs.

Samo. Even more dangerous to the Slavs than the Germans on the West, were the fierce Avars, a nomad people of Turko-Tartar origin, who, hailing from Asia, attacked the Slavs on the East. The more peaceful Slav tribes were unable to resist them, and thus fell an easy prey to Avar domination. When after about fifty years of Avar rule, in about 620 A. D., their lot grew intolerable, they rose in rebellion. With Samo, a Frankish merchant, as their leader, they succeeded in freeing themselves. Then out of gratitude to Samo, they chose him king of a united Slav kingdom. Even the Slavs living in the Alps placed themselves under his rule.

Soon afterwards, discord broke out between the Slavs and the Bavarians, who had submitted to Frankish domination. These Germans, growing jealous of Samo, sought to gain control of his kingdom. But Samo won a brilliant victory over them in 631, and drove them out of Bohemia.

Samo was the first to found a large Slavonic Empire in the West. Unfortunately, he held his people together chiefly by the force of his own personality. When he died, his empire fell.

Samo is a historical figure. He really lived; we know surely and definitely what he achieved and when he achieved it. After him, however, the life of the Slavs is thrust back into that shadow which the light of history cannot penetrate, which is pierced only by the flickering flame of tale and legend.

The Age of Tale and Legend.

Krok and his Daughters.

The period in which Čech lived was, as legend has it, a Golden Age, so happy and prosperous were the people. At this time there lived in the land a wise and greatly respected judge, whose name

was Krok. So great was his wisdom, that his renown spread far and wide, and people from neighbouring tribes came to him with their disputes and quarrels. When Čech died, Krok was chosen judge or prince of the whole Czech nation. He therefore built himself a stronghold on a rocky precipice on the right bank of the river Vltava. Since this castle built by Krok towered so mightily above the silver waters of the river, it was called Vyšehrad (the Castle on the Heights).

The wise judge Krok was outlived by three daughters, whose names were Kazi, Tetka, and Libuše. Each one of them was famous for some art in which she excelled. Kazi understood the healing powers of various plants and roots; since those were days of superstition and dread of the mysterious, she was believed to be a witch. Krok's second daughter, Tetka, knew all the intricacies of Slav religious ceremony. She also explained to the people many things about the various gods, and the most fitting forms of worship. She lived in Tetín, a castle overlooking the river Mže.

Libuše, Krok's youngest daughter, surpassed her sisters in the virtues of heart and of mind. She was both noble and beautiful; good to everybody, she was in every way the fairest flower of her sex and a shining example to all. Libuše also possessed the gift of prophecy. It was whispered that, in order to penetrate time and space, she flew out at night on an enchanted horse, returning to her castle only before dawn. Besides her virtue and her prophetic powers, she understood law and customs. Therefore, after the death of Krok, the people chose her for their judge and ruler.

Libuše and Přemysl.

Libuše as Judge. Libuše ruled wisely and justly. One day there appeared at her court two brothers, between whom a dispute had arisen over the boundaries of their fields. Libuše heard them both, and then gave her decision, which sounded in favour of the younger brother. No sooner had she spoken, than the elder, trembling with anger, struck the ground three times with his large staff and burst out with a torrent of angry words:

"Such is justice, when women are judges! Nowhere else in the whole wide world do women rule over men, and we are a laughing-stock to all other peoples! Better it is for men to die, than to tolerate a woman as judge! Shame on us!"

The assembled company, amazed at this bold abuse, dared not utter a word. Only Libuše herself, flushed with shame and smiling painfully, exclaimed:

"Thy words are true! Woman I am and as woman I behave. Only because I do not rule over you with a rod of iron, you think that I do not understand law. I can see now, that you need a sterner judge, than I, a woman, can ever be. And your need shall be provided for. Return now to your homes, and tomorrow you shall choose a husband for me and a master for yourselves."

Libuše's Choice. On the following day Libuše assembled her people at Vyšehrad in order to announce her decision. Sitting on her throne, she greeted them. Then she rose, and, pointing to the north, in the direction of the mountains, she spoke:

"Behind yonder mountains there flows a little river, Bělina by name; on its banks stands a small village, where lives the family of the Stadičí. Near the village is a field, which a man is ploughing, and his plough is drawn by two spotted bulls. If you would go in search of a good and fitting master, seek out this man, and give him this princely cloak. Tell him that the people have chosen him as their lord and judge and that I have chosen him as my husband. His name is Přemysl, and his descendants will rule over the whole of this land for long centuries."

The people voiced their approval of Libuše's advice, and chose messengers to be sent to Přemysl. These, however, did not know the way, so Libuše helped them out of the difficulty:

"My steed will lead you", she said. "Do not hesitate to follow him, and he will show you the way aright."

Libuše's Marriage. Everything happened just as Libuše had foretold. The messengers went over hill and dale, until they came to the field that she had described. When the white steed stopped before the stalwart ploughman who was working there, they knew that they had at last reached their goal. Therefore they bowed to the labourer, and announced their lady's message.

Přemysl immediately stopped in his work. He unharnessed the bulls and cried to them: "Return whence ye came." The neighbouring rocks opened forthwith and the beasts disappeared, never to be seen again by the eye of man.

Then Přemysl took his whip and planted it in the soil. Straightway it took root, and three large limbs branched out from it, covered with foliage and fruit, while the messengers stood

petrified with amazement. Then he drew a piece of bread and cheese from the woven bag which hung at his belt. Laying the food on the ground before them, he invited the envoys in a kindly voice to breakfast with him. They gladly accepted.

As they were eating their simple meal, the leaves that grew on two of the branches of the magic tree dried up and dropped to the ground. The third branch, however, grew higher, and its leaves more luxuriant. When he saw the ever-increasing wonder and fear of his guests, he reassured them, saying :

“Behold, from my race many nobles will be born, but only one branch will rule. If your mistress had not been in such a hurry, if she had not sent for me so early, but had calmly awaited her fate, I should have finished ploughing the field, and there would have been an abundance of bread in this land for all time. But since you have interrupted my labours, our nation will often suffer from famine.”

Breakfast was over. The ploughman put on the royal raiment which Libuše had sent him. Then he picked up his shoes and his woven bag. When his companions, naturally curious, asked what he wanted to do with these articles, he answered :

“I shall have them kept for ever, that my descendants may never forget their humble origin, that they may live in humility and fear, and that they may never oppress the people whom God has placed in their charge, since we are all equal by nature.”

Mounting Libuše’s steed, with the messengers behind him, he rode towards Vyšehrad, where he was joyfully received. His wedding with Libuše was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing.

The Founding of Praha. Soon after her marriage Libuše ordered a new castle to be built on the hill which is bounded on the midnight side (that is, on the north) by the brook Brusnice, just before it flows into the Vltava. Naming her new home Praha, Libuše foretold its future in glowing colours :

“I see a great city, whose glory will reach unto the stars.”

The Women’s Revolt

Vlasta. When Libuše departed this life, her ladies-in-waiting soon found to their sorrow that they were not so much respected as during the lifetime of their late mistress. They resolved, therefore, no longer to tolerate oppression at the hands of the men.

Foremost among them was a maiden named Vlasta. She issued a call to her faithful friends and invited them to co-operate with her by building a stronghold against the men. Many women obeyed and soon there towered a powerful castle on the banks of the Vltava opposite Vyšehrad. Its builders named it Děvín (Děva = maiden).

Obedient to Vlasta's call, the women assembled at Děvín from all sides, leaving their fathers, husbands, and brothers behind, while these little suspected all that was in store for them. The men did not believe that the women would persist in their rebellion. They thought that a single glance at the men's bright armour and flashing swords would suffice to frighten and to scatter their fair opponents; therefore they marched on Děvín laughing and joking. Just as they were approaching the castle, Vlasta, mounted on her steed and holding a javelin, burst from its gates, her faithful feminine army at her heels. A bloody battle ensued, in which the men were defeated.

Ctirad and Šárka. Bravest of the men was a handsome young noble named Ctirad. Vlasta, wishing to get rid of so dangerous an enemy, decided to set a trap for him. She ascertained the time when he would be going to the castle of Praha, and caused one of the most beautiful of her maidens, Šárka, to be bound to an old oak-tree near the road which Ctirad would have to take.

Ctirad, accompanied by an armed band, was passing this place in the heat of the noon-day sun. Suddenly he heard calls for help and woeful weeping. He did not hesitate for an instant, but turned from the road in the direction from which the sounds came. Little did he heed the crowing of a raven overhead, the sure omen of approaching disaster. He rushed to the oak-tree and found the fair Šárka cruelly bound to it. She was wearied by her cries; her head was bent, her golden hair flowing. Fastened by a strap over her shoulder hung a hunting-bugle. As soon as Ctirad caught sight of her, he jumped from his horse and cut the rope that bound her.

The maiden, thus freed, praised her deliverer and thanked him most charmingly. Then she told how Vlasta's followers had surprised her in the forest and had tried to force her to join their ranks, how she had resisted them, how, hearing the gallop of horses, they had in their anger tied her to the oak, so that she could not move. Maliciously, she said, they had flung the bugle

over her shoulder, telling her with scorn to blow it for help, if she could. On the grass near by they had placed a tempting bowl of mead, so that, in her thirst, she could see it, but could not reach it.

Ctirad, sorry for the maiden in her suffering, handed her the bowl of mead and sat down beside her. Šárka drank and then offered him the bowl. Meanwhile, his companions found a resting-place on the soft grass some distance from the two young people. Ctirad, charmed by the sight of the fair young girl, and sipping the sweet refreshing drink, listened to her story. He kept glancing curiously at her bugle, until finally she let him examine it. He was curious to hear how it sounded. Šárka allowed him to blow it. He lifted it to his lips and blew, until its loud clear call resounded through the countryside. The sound had hardly ceased, when, shouting wildly, a troop of armed women ran to the spot. Before Ctirad's followers knew what was happening, the women attacked them with javelins, and wounded or killed all of them. Ctirad himself, bound in chains, learned only too late of Šárka's ruse. As prisoner, he was taken to Děvín, and there condemned to death. Near the castle he was tortured on the wheel until he died.

The Fall of Proud Děvín. Every man in the country was stirred by the news of Ctirad's terrible fate. Men rushed to Vyšehrad from all directions, planning to take revenge on the women. Vlasta with her party attacked them, but could not resist their might. Fighting bravely, she met her end. Her followers retreated in confusion, seeking to save themselves on Děvín. The men followed and beat the rebels to death or cast them into the river below, so that not one of them was left. When the castle was thus cleared, the conquerors set fire to it. Děvín was burnt to the ground and no trace of its glory remains.

The Story of Horymír.

No authentic account of Přemysl's immediate successors remains. Only their names have been handed down to us. They are: Nezamysl, Mnáta, Vojen, Unislav, Křesomysl, Neklan, and Hostivít. We do know, however, a few legends dating back to the time of Křesomysl and of Neklan.

During the reign of Křesomysl, about the year 800, there lived in Neumětely a noble called Horymír. Neumětely was a village

situated not far from the Příbram Hills. At this time, people were beginning to mine for silver there, and also found gold in the sands of neighbouring brooks. When farmers turned miners, cattle and fields were neglected, and famine in the vicinity of Příbram was the natural result. Wise men saw ever-increasing disaster in the decline of agriculture; therefore, choosing Horymír as their spokesman, they demanded that Křesomysl should take steps against the miners. But the ruler would not hear of it, as the miners were his special favourites. Horymír therefore decided to take the matter into his own hands, and, by destroying the mines, to stop the activity of the miners for good. These, however, soon heard of Horymír's plans, and without hesitation sought revenge by burning his village. Horymír assembled all the men of his clan, mounted his faithful horse Šemík, and hastened with his followers to the mines. Taking his enemies by surprise, in the dead of night, he set fire to their huts, and blocked the entrances to the silver-mines by means of huge rocks. In spite of the darkness, the miners recognized the culprit and petitioned Lord Křesomysl that justice be done them and that Horymír be punished.

When he heard of Horymír's crime, Křesomysl flew into a rage. He ordered the noble to be cast into prison immediately, and he held his court at Vyšehrad in order to pronounce sentence on him. Horymír's friends begged for mercy, but their pleas were in vain. The miners demanded that he should be condemned to death, and the ruler was of their mind. Therefore Horymír was sentenced to die by his own sword. His enemies heard the sentence with loud rejoicing, but his friends were heart-broken.

When Horymír learned of the fate that awaited him, he stepped before Křesomysl and said, "Deign to be merciful, O revered Lord, and grant me one favour before I die! Let me ride my faithful steed once more!"

Křesomysl, granting the condemned man's last wish, ordered all the gates of Vyšehrad to be locked. As soon as this command had been carried out, Horymír mounted Šemík in a flash, and cried, "Come, my true comrade, carry me once more! Let us go for one last ride!"

Now, it was as if the horse understood its master's words, for it started off at a gay trot which soon changed to a gallop. Three times, ever faster and faster, it encircled the walls of Vyšehrad. Then, at a wild pace, it sprang with a mighty leap over

the high wooden wall of Vyšehrad, and, rushing down the steep slope, plunged into the river far below. Before the company at Vyšehrad could recover from its amazement, Šemík, bearing its master, had already reached the opposite shore of the Vltava and was galloping towards Radotín.

Křesomysl heard the pleas of Horymír's friends this time, and persecuted the daring rider no more. But Šemík paid for its devotion with its life. Having injured itself in its sudden descent, this faithful horse died.

Tyr the Brave.

Neklan and Vlastislav. Křesomysl's successor was the cowardly Neklan. The new ruler was kept in a state of constant worry by his neighbour Vlastislav, lord of the Lučané, whose territory extended on the left bank of the river Ohře. Vlastislav, being daring and ambitious, wished to invade Neklan's lands and become their master. Placing a sword in the hands of his servants, he sent them to all parts of the realm to gather recruits for the army. Every man whose height exceeded the length of the princely sword, had to join. Whoever hesitated was beheaded.

Tyr. When Neklan learnt that Vlastislav was getting ready for war, he trembled with fear. Then the cowardly lord thought of a plan which would make him safe. Secretly he ordered the commander Tyr (Čestmír) to put on the lordly armour, mount the lord's horse, and stand at the head of the army, so that the people would think that Neklan was leading them, while in reality it would be Tyr.

The leader obeyed. The battle with the Lučané took place on the field of Tursko (where today stands the village Tursko, in the district of Smíchov). Just before the fighting, Tyr encouraged his men in an enthusiastic speech, which had such a powerful effect on them, that they performed miracles of bravery. Thus it was no wonder that Vlastislav's army was crushed, and Vlastislav himself killed. Unfortunately Tyr also perished from the wounds he had received.

The noble leader was buried on the battlefield according to his wishes, and long afterwards people pointed out the mound which marked the resting-place of the victorious Tyr.

The Little Orphan Lord.

Vlastislav left behind him a young son, a very bright, attractive child, who, by reason of his father's defeat and death, fell into the hands of Neklan. The new guardian let the boy keep his old tutor, Durynk, who came from the northern Serbian settlements on the Elbe. Durynk did not deserve the trust that was placed in him. Hoping to find favour in Neklan's eyes and to receive a recompense, he decided to get rid of his ward.

It was winter. In the river Ohře, in the water which was flowing under the ice, there appeared a multitude of fish. Durynk asked the orphan to go fishing with him. The little boy obeyed. The man carried an axe with which to make a hole in the ice, so that the fish could be reached. Coming to the river, Durynk showed them to the child. The boy knelt down on the ice to see them better. No sooner had he done so than Durynk, lifting the axe, raised it on high, and with one powerful blow chopped off the child's head. Leaving the body on the ice, he wrapped the head in a piece of white linen and carried it to the castle. He placed it on a platter and carried it to Neklan as a gift. Neklan may have been weak and cowardly, but he was not a wicked man. Durynk's deed angered as well as horrified him, and he condemned the murderer to death. Only one favour was granted Durynk. He was allowed to choose the manner of his death: he could leap from a steep mountain, or kill himself with his own sword, or hang himself. Durynk chose this last, and the tree on which he died was long after known as "Durynk's elm."

These legends in general serve to show that the most powerful tribe in Bohemia was the tribe of the Czechs (Čechové) proper, who lived in the heart of the country. By alliance and by sword they succeeded little by little in gaining control of all the neighbouring tribes.

CHAPTER II.

The Dawn of Czechoslovak History.

The Kingdom of Greater Moravia.

The Coming of Christianity. Christianity first came to us from the west, from Bavaria and especially from the Frankish kingdom, in the eighth century. Charlemagne, about the year 800, was most anxious to christianize the pagan Slavs. But these could not understand the new faith, and began objecting to it when they observed that missionaries were usually followed by soldiers who tried to conquer the country for their western masters. In fact, Bohemia did become a tributary province.

German missionaries therefore laboured without result not only in Bohemia, but also in the neighbouring Moravia, which reached to the left bank of the Danube, and in Slovakia, where Lord Pribina, who ruled in Nitra, sought to aid them. Pribina built the first church in our land — the Church of St Nicholas at Nitra (A. D. 830).

Mojmir and Rastislav. The oldest known lord of Moravia is Mojmir. Expelling Pribina out of the district of Nitra, he became the lord of most of present-day Slovakia as well, thus founding the large kingdom of Greater Moravia. Mojmir's successor, Rastislav, soon perceived that the best way for Moravia to get rid of its Christian enemies would be to adopt Christianity. He judged that then the Germans would have no more cause for making war on his people. Rastislav saw that the nation would be converted to Christianity only by missionaries whose language could be understood. At the same time the lord was most anxious that his missionaries should seek not riches and worldly power, but the saving of souls. Since in Rome no suitable missionaries could be found, Rastislav turned to Constantinople.

Constantine and Methodius. At that time, Constantinople had among its citizens two wise brothers, Constantine and Methodius

by name. They were Greeks, but had spent their youth in Salonica, and therefore knew thoroughly the language of the Slavs there, which at that time did not differ much from the language spoken in Bohemia and Moravia. They had proved successful as missionaries among neighbouring peoples.

As soon as they returned from their sojourn among the Chazars (on the Black Sea), they were sent to Moravia by their Emperor, Michael III. Before undertaking the journey, Constantine put together a Slavonic alphabet, for the Slavs of that period did not yet know how to read and write in their own language. Constantine's alphabet is known as the Glagolitic one, and it is derived from the Greek alphabet, which Constantine applied to the sounds in the Slav languages. With the aid of an alphabet, it was now possible to write, and Constantine translated parts of the Bible and certain other religious books into the Slavonic. In the year 863 the two brothers went to Moravia, where they were joyfully received. Since the people could understand them, they flocked to their services, at which the vulgar tongue was used.

The German missionaries, soon hating their more successful Greek rivals, feared that the Moravian lands would be lost to Western Christianity for ever. Therefore they began criticizing the two brothers for using a language other than Hebrew, Greek, or Latin in their services. The Germans complained to the Pope that the teachings of Constantine and Methodius were unorthodox. The Pope invited the brothers to come to Rome and justify themselves. The Germans hoped that the Greeks would be condemned by the Holy Father and that their activity in Moravia would be checked, but on the contrary the Pope recognized the orthodoxy of their doctrines and even approved of services in the popular language.

But Constantine did not return to Moravia. Wearied by his great labours, he felt that the days of his life were numbered; therefore he entered a Roman monastery, where he accepted the name of Cyril. Even on his deathbed he prayed for the Slavs. He was buried with great pomp and ceremony in the Church of St Clement, beside holy relics which he himself had brought to Rome from his missionary journeys.

Methodius, while in Rome, was made Archbishop by the Pope, and he did not stay long in the Holy City. Mindful of his brother's dying wishes as well as of the needs of the Slavs, he soon left for Moravia. He did not at once reach his destination. Falling into

the hands of the Bavarian bishops on the way, he was tortured by them and kept prisoner for a period of three years.

Death of Rastislav. The Czechoslovak lands were constantly troubled by the powerful Franks. German expeditions into Moravia were stopped for a time when a great fortress called Děvín was built in 869 at the point where the river Morava flows into the Danube. Lord Rastislav succeeded in remaining the master of his country, until he quarrelled with his nephew, Svatopluk, lord of the Nitra district. Matters came to such a pass that Svatopluk took his uncle captive, and handed him over to King Louis the German, Rastislav's bitterest enemy. Louis had his prisoner blinded and cast into a cloister, where the great Moravian lord died in want and suffering.

Svatopluk. King Louis soon lost all confidence in Svatopluk. He ordered the lord to be arrested, taken to Germany, and imprisoned there. Thus Moravia fell into the hands of the Germans.

The Moravians, believing that Svatopluk had been murdered, rose up in rebellion against their new masters, and succeeded so well that the Germans were very nearly defeated. Svatopluk, who was informed of these events, offered his services to King Louis saying that he would break the resistance of his countrymen. The king, hard-pressed, accepted, and placed his captive in the army. At the decisive moment, Svatopluk went over to the side of the Moravians, who now fought so well that the invaders suffered an unexpected and crushing defeat.

Growth of Svatopluk's Power. The war between the Moravians and the Germans continued for many years. The latter were defeated in many engagements, and Svatopluk not only kept his throne, but even built up a powerful kingdom, which came to include a part of Poland and Austria as well as Moravia, Slovakia, and Pannonia, while the Czechs and the Serbians of Lužice were subservient to it also.

Svatopluk and Methodius. Methodius was freed by the Bavarian bishops only when the Pope himself intervened in his favour. Returning at last to Moravia, the Archbishop resumed his missionary enterprises.

He was not left to himself for long. His German rivals again began complaining of him to the Pope. Chief among these was Wiching, who objected most vehemently to services in the Slav

language. Wiching and the others worked against Methodius so tirelessly that again he was forced to undertake a journey to Rome and appear before the Pope. Again Methodius cleared himself of all blame.

Unfortunately for the Greek missionary, Svatopluk became his enemy. This was natural since Methodius reproached him for not behaving as befitted a Christian ruler, while on the other hand the German and Italian priests were willing to shut their eyes to Svatopluk's sins. Svatopluk therefore hated Methodius and favoured his rivals, and even made the chief of them, Wiching, Bishop of Nitra. Methodius died in 885, an old and disappointed man.

The Importance of Constantine and Methodius. The names of the two brothers hold an important place in the history of Czechoslovakia. Methodius was the first Archbishop of the Slavs. Both brothers performed important missionary labours, and Constantine-Cyril gave the Slavs an alphabet,¹ founded their literature, and thus brought them within the pale of civilized nations.

The Fate of the Slavonic Liturgy. After the death of Methodius, his followers encountered ever-increasing difficulties. The priests who loved the Latin services made constant complaints to the Pope, who finally forbade the Holy Mass to be celebrated in the language of the Slavs. The Slav priests were persecuted and tortured, or they were driven out of the land. Thus were the Czech lands for ever lost, but for some trifling exceptions, to the Slavonic liturgy. The fugitive priests found refuge in Bulgaria, where they fared far better. Bulgaria, Croatia, and even vast Russia came to celebrate Mass in the Slav language according to their teaching.

The End of Svatopluk's Reign. Bishop Wiching, whom Svatopluk had favoured, proved unfaithful. He went over to the side of the Germans, and gave them valuable advice in their struggle against Greater Moravia. Svatopluk withstood, however, the German attacks, and his country remained unconquered as long as he lived.

But Svatopluk was growing old, and felt that he had not long to live. Anxious that Greater Moravia should not end with him, he called his three sons to his bedside just before he died, in the spring of 894, in order to give them his counsel. He presented to them in turn a bundle of three sticks, firmly bound together, and ordered them to break it asunder. Each son tried, but in vain. No one was strong enough to break the three rods at once. The father

then cut the cord that held the bundle together, and handed one stick to each of his sons. Now the young men broke them without any difficulty whatever. Svatopluk, who had sadly observed the procedure, turned to them, saying, "If you, my children, live in brotherly faith and love, and remain loyal to one another, no enemy will have the power to overcome you. But if discord arise among you, and you divide your lands, then will this country be overrun



Fig. 5. The Empire of Greater Moravia.

by the enemy, and all three of you will be broken, even as you have broken the rods." Having given this piece of advice, Svatopluk died.

Fall of the Kingdom of Greater Moravia. Lord Svatopluk was succeeded by his eldest son, Mojmir II. The brothers, however, soon forgot their father's dying words, and began fighting over their inheritance. The Czechs and, not long after, the Serbians, broke away from Greater Moravia.

Mojmir II, though greatly weakened, succeeded in repulsing his German neighbours who made war on him. But a new and more potent danger soon forced him to come to terms with them. At this time a fierce nomadic Turko-Tartar people, the Magyars,

began making inroads into Mojmir's kingdom from the east. They were small in stature, with yellow complexions and slanting eyes. Their heads were clean-shaven save for three long locks of hair. After protracted wanderings, led by the chief Arpad, they settled in Hungary, between the Danube and Tisza rivers, in the land that was the Pannonia of Svatopluk's kingdom.

Mojmir resisted their first incursions, but the warlike people continued to make attack after attack on the already weakened land, until, in the year 906, the proud Greater Moravia fell into their hands. Thus a stronghold of civilization disappeared, and for fifty years the way into all the lands of the Danube and of the Ohře was opened to Magyar invasions, their pillage, and their plunder.

The Rulers of Bohemia.

The First Christian Lords. In Bohemia, Christianity first took root in the time of Lord Bořivoj, who probably was baptized by Methodius while visiting Svatopluk's court. His wife, Lidmila, daughter of the lord of the Pšované, followed his example. Bořivoj built the first Christian church in Bohemia at Levý Hradec, north of Praha, in honour of St Clement.

Bořivoj was succeeded by his son, Spytihněv, who built a church in honour of St Peter at his castle, Budeč, and established a school there which was to become famous. Vratislav, Spytihněv's brother and successor, built a church in honour of St George by the castle at Praha. Vratislav died in 921, while still a young man. He was outlived by his wife, Drahomíra, and by two sons, Václav and Boleslav. His elder son, Václav, who was only a boy at the time, was acknowledged as heir to the throne.

Lidmila and Drahomíra. Václav was a great favourite of his grandmother, Lidmila. She became his first teacher, and saw to it that he learnt the Slavonic script. Václav received his further education in the school at Budeč, which was directed by Latin priests.

Until Václav came of age, his mother, Drahomíra, ruled as regent. She was a masterful and hot-tempered woman, and was most jealous of her mother-in-law, the gentle Lidmila, who was greatly beloved not only by Václav, but by the nation as a whole. Drahomíra hated the old lady more and more as time went on, and finally decided to get rid of her. On the night of September 15 in the year 921, Lidmila, as she was kneeling in prayer in her

castle, Tetín, was strangled by Drahomíra's retainers. From the first, the gentle martyr was revered by the people as a saint.

Saint Václav. Václav probably took up the reins of government in 922. In spite of his youth, he proved to be a very able ruler. His close touch with his pious grandmother had an important effect on him, and he stands out as a model of what a Christian prince ought to be. He set slaves free, gave pardon to prisoners, was just in court and kindly to all. He punished men for cruelty and drunkenness, but hesitated before pronouncing the death-sentence.

At the same time he was brave, defeating in battle his neighbour from the north-east, Radslav, powerful lord of the Zličané, who had cast covetous eyes on his lands. Soon afterwards, Václav was engaged in a war with Henry I, King of the Franks, who wanted to force Bohemia to pay him its customary tax. Václav had refused, and therefore Henry with his army had invaded Bohemia. But Václav was prudent as well as brave. When he saw that he could not resist the invaders without great loss of life, he gave in, and the tax was paid as formerly.

When good terms were re-established, King Henry gave Václav an arm of St Vitus, and the Czech lord placed the holy relic in the new church he was building within the court of the castle at Praha. The church he named in that saint's honour.

Václav and Boleslav. Václav had a younger brother, Boleslav, who was dissatisfied with the terms of the peace with Henry, and jealous of Václav's power and popularity, and therefore plotted for the ruler's death. To carry out his plan, he invited the unsuspecting Václav to come to the castle at Stará Boleslav, where Boleslav was celebrating the christening of his son. Václav came and attended the ceremony and the merry-making which followed. But on the next morning, which was Monday, September 28, 929, as Václav was hastening to church to attend Mass, he was attacked by his perfidious brother. He was able to repulse the onslaught, but hired assassins rushed to Boleslav's aid, and just before the door of the church the noble Václav was killed.

The Cult of Saint Václav. Soon the Czechs associated with Václav's name all that was near and dear to them, and soon they came to venerate him as a saint. He became the first national patron. The Czechs took the greatest care of all that had belonged

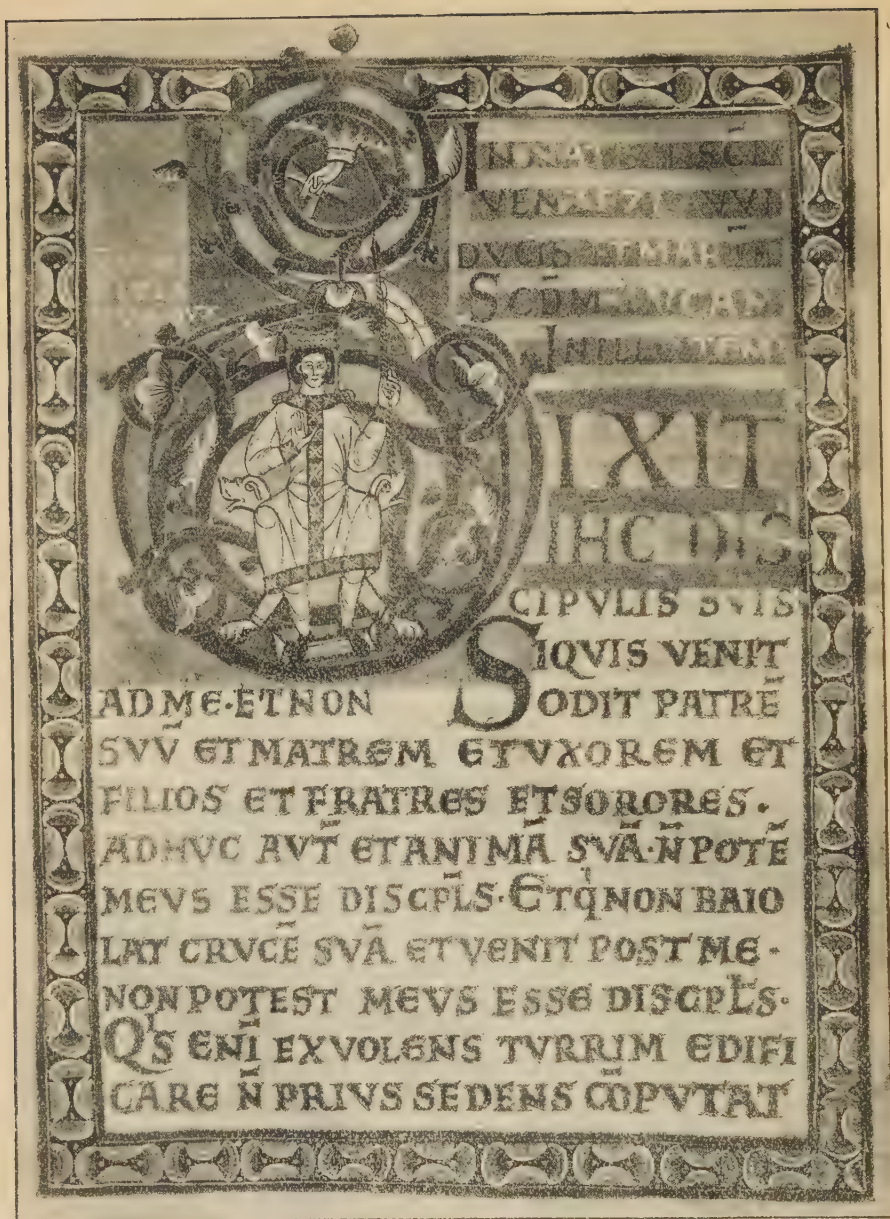


Fig. 6. Facsimile of a page of the Vyšehrad Codex of the Gospels.
 (The figure is that of St Václav).

to him — his helmet, his sword, and his coat of mail. They built churches in his honour, and called the castle at Praha Václav's Castle. The old Czech lords engraved his name on their coins, and placed seals bearing his image on important documents. Czech armies fought under his banners. In later times, when the Bohemian nation suffered and was oppressed, it was whispered that Václav with his knights lay sleeping in Mount Blaník, and would, in the time of the country's greatest need, ride out with his brave companions to aid his native land. From the thirteenth century onwards, a beautiful hymn has resounded in the Czech churches: "O Saint Václav, Duke of Bohemian lands". Later, when Václav was depicted as the liberator of the Czech lands from German oppression, new verses were added to the hymn:

O thou inheritor of Bohemia,
Remember thy race, thy people,
Suffer not us
Nor our children to perish
Saint Václav,
Kyrie eleison.

Father and Son.

Boleslav I. (929—967). The news of Václav's death spread rapidly, and gave the new ruler an unenviable reputation. Henceforth he was called Boleslav the Cruel. Taking advantage of the confusion within the German kingdom, Boleslav ceased to pay taxes to Germany; therefore the new king, Oto I, declared war on him. The struggle continued for fourteen years, when at last Boleslav sued for peace, and promised to make the payment. From that time Boleslav gave his powerful German neighbour valuable aid in the wars against the Magyars, in which the Czech ruler probably gained Moravia and Slovakia. Later Boleslav gained control of a part of Silesia. Thus his lands spread as far as Cracow and bordered on Poland. Christianity penetrated from Bohemia into that country when Boleslav's daughter, Dubravka, married the Polish lord Měšek of the Pjast family, and he accepted his wife's faith.

Boleslav had several children. He promised to consecrate his second son, Strachkvas, to God's service, in order to atone for his sin. Strachkvas accepted the name Christian when he entered a monastery, and, it is said, became the originator of the legends about Václav and Lidmila.

Boleslav II. (967—999). Boleslav I was succeeded by his son, Boleslav II. Although he inherited his father's hardness of heart, he is known in history as Boleslav the Pious, since he founded churches and established a cloister for "saintly maidens" by the Church of St George. Milada, the founder's sister, became the first abbess of this cloister. Boleslav defended his realm against the Germans, but lost Silesia to Poland.

Founding of the Bishopric of Praha. The loss of Silesia was more than compensated for by a gain in another direction. Up to this time, Bohemia had been a part of the Bishopric of Ratisbon. After long negotiations, the Bishop of Ratisbon gave his consent to the founding of an independent bishopric in Bohemia, with its seat at Praha. This took place in 973. The first Bishop of Praha was Dětmar who, although a Saxon by birth, knew the Czech language. Dětmar was succeeded by a Czech, Vojtěch (Albert), a member of the powerful family of the Slavníkovci, lords of Zlicko.

Saint Vojtěch. Vojtěch as bishop tried, first of all, to put a stop to the pagan customs which were still current among the Czechs. Vojtěch's fame travelled so far, that the great Khan of the Magyars, Gejza, invited the bishop to his court to baptize his son, Stephen. When Vojtěch returned to Bohemia, his reforming zeal was so great that the people and the nobles and even Lord Boleslav II himself began objecting to his activity. His greatest enemies among the nobles were the Vršovci. Vojtěch, embittered by these difficulties, left his episcopate and went to Rome, where he entered a monastery. His services, however, were urgently needed at home, and Boleslav begged him to return to Praha. Vojtěch reluctantly obeyed, bringing with him monks of the order of St Benedict, for whom he built a monastery at Břevnov. Before long, new disputes with the Vršovci caused him to seek refuge in Rome for the second time. Again Boleslav recalled him. But on his way to Bohemia, Vojtěch learned that the Czechs did not sincerely wish for his return, and that almost all of his family, the Slavníkovci, had been destroyed in a struggle with Boleslav (995). Therefore he changed his course, and turned to Poland instead.

The lord of Poland at that time was Boleslav the Brave, a man of outstanding talents, who was the son of Měšek and Dubravka. The Polish lord welcomed Vojtěch cordially, but Vojtěch did not desire [to lead an easy life. In accordance with the ascetic ideals

of the time, he longed for the martyr's crown. Leaving Poland, he became a missionary to the pagan Prussians, Poland's Baltic neighbours. As soon as he set his foot in a field that was sacred to them, he was murdered, and his body was cut into pieces (997). Thus Vojtěch's ambition was realized, and he died a martyr's death. Boleslav the Brave, informed of Vojtěch's terrible end, acquired from the pagans the martyr's remains, which he laid to rest at his capital, Hnězdno, where he founded an archbishopric. Radim, a kinsman of Vojtěch, became the first Archbishop of Hnězdno. At this time, the Magyars, converted to Christianity, founded an archbishopric with its seat at Ostřihom, and here, too, the first Archbishop was a Czech, Astrik by name.

In later times, the old Bohemian hymn, "Hospodine pomiluj ny" ("O God, love us!") was attributed to Vojtěch. In reality, this chant is of later origin, dating from the twelfth century. In times of storm and stress, the Czechs plunged into battle singing its strains, fervently imploring God to give "peace and plenty to their land".

The Heirs of Boleslav II.

Boleslav III. After the death of Boleslav II, Bohemia's greatness declined, due to the inefficiency of his successor, Boleslav III, or Boleslav the Red-haired. He exiled his brothers Jaromír and Oldřich (Ulric) from his court, and soon lost the nation's confidence. His cousin, Boleslav the Brave of Poland, took advantage of his increasing unpopularity and seized the throne, founding a large Slavonic empire to combat German ambitions.

Jaromír and Oldřich. The Czechs soon grew dissatisfied with the Polish rule. They secured the aid of the German emperor, Henry II, who took up the cause of Boleslav III's exiled brothers, forced the Poles out of Bohemia, and made Jaromír Lord. Oldřich, desirous of getting power into his own hands, had his brother Jaromír blinded, and drove him out. Thus Oldřich himself became Lord of Bohemia; but he ruled over only Bohemia proper, losing the other Bohemian lands to the Poles.

Oldřich and Božena (Beatrice). Once Oldřich, as he was returning from the chase, saw a peasant maiden, Božena, as she was washing linen in a brook near the out-of-the-way village in which she lived. Straightway he fell in love with her, and soon married

her. When some of the Bohemian nobles reproached him for marrying a mere peasant girl, he answered them saying, "Every man's heart belongs to his own nation, therefore I preferred to choose for my wife a Czech peasant girl rather than a German princess. If my wife were a German, she would want only Germans about her. She would bring up her children in the German language, and Bohemia would suffer thereby".

Oldřich and Prokop. Once while wandering in the forests near the river Sázava, Oldřich met the hermit Prokop, who, in his solitary retreat, was saying Mass in the Slav tongue, as Cyril and Methodius had taught in Moravia. The holy man found favour in the lord's eyes, and Oldřich founded a monastery in the Sázava forests, which should be a refuge for Slav monks. Prokop himself became its first Abbot.

Lord Břetislav.

Břetislav's Youth. Oldřich and Božena had a son, Břetislav. Břetislav grew to be a handsome and impetuous young man. He refused to bow down to the Germans, who, filled with a false pride, scorned all Slavonic things. Břetislav fell in love with Jitka (Judith), a beautiful young girl, who was carefully guarded in a convent in Germany. He burst into the cloister, carried away Jitka and married her. After the death of Boleslav the Brave, Břetislav gained control of Moravia, but tried in vain to regain Slovakia, which was conquered by Stephen I, (called St Stephen), King of Hungary. The result of the Hungarian conquest of Slovakia was the assimilation of Slavonic culture by the Magyars. That such was the case is to be seen by the many Slav words that made their way into the Magyar tongue: thus, for example, the Slovak word "seno" (hay) became "szena" in the Hungarian, "beran" (sheep) became "barány", "brázda" (furrow) became "barázda", "kováč" (blacksmith) became "kovács", and so on.

Subcarpathian Russia. Nomadic Slav shepherd tribes had settled in Subcarpathian Russia. They spoke a Russian dialect, and were the ancestors of the present-day Ruthenians. The Hungarians soon subdued them, and they then performed valuable services for their conquerors as guardians of the frontier.

The Expedition into Poland. Upon the death of Oldřich, the brother whom he had so cruelly blinded and deprived of the

throne, Jaromír, was to rule. But the blind old man gave up his claims, and thus Břetislav became ruler of Bohemia (1034—1055). Břetislav invaded Poland, where a bitter dynastic war was going on. Luck was with him. He managed to subdue the whole of Poland, conquered even Hnězdno, its capital, and brought home enormous booty. Of all the treasures which he had seized in Poland, Břetislav valued most the relics of St Vojtěch. He hoped that with the holy remains in Praha, his cherished ambitions would come true and the Bishopric of Praha would become an Archbishopric. His plans failed: the Pope did not approve of his Polish expedition and refused to elevate the Bohemian diocese.

The War with the Germans. Břetislav also fell into disfavour with Henry III, the German Emperor, who decided to humble the Czech Lord once for all. Contrary to all expectations, however, Henry's army was routed near Domažlice in south-western Bohemia in 1040. Another German force entered the country by a pass in the Krušné Hory (Ore Mountains) which form the north-western boundary of Bohemia. The way had been opened by Prkoš, a treacherous caretaker at the castle of Bílina. But this second army suffered the fate of the first, and was completely defeated by Břetislav's men. The unfaithful Prkoš was punished for his treason. His limbs were cut off and he was cast into the waters of the Bílina.

The defeated German ruler prepared to revenge himself on Břetislav. In 1041, during harvest-time, he invaded Bohemia, and laying waste the land, burning and pillaging as he went, surrounded Břetislav's castle at Praha. The Bohemian lord's men, fearing for the future, began to leave their leader. Nothing else remained for Břetislav to do but to surrender. Therefore he gave himself up to Henry, promising to pay the old tax which amounted to 120 oxen and 500 talents of silver annually.* In return, Henry recognized him as ruler of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Later, while disputes in Hungary were going on, Břetislav gained for a time a part of Slovakia.

Břetislav ended his long struggle with Poland by the Peace of 1054, by which he gave up Silesia, but was to receive in return an annual payment of 500 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold.

* A talent of silver (hřivna) weighed about $\frac{1}{4}$ kg or 9 oz., and was worth about 40 crowns or \$ 8.00 before the war.

At the beginning of the year 1055, Břetislav died. On his deathbed he declared that in the future the eldest member of the Přemyslide family should always rule, according to "the old law of hereditary right by age".

Břetislav's Sons.

Spytihněv II, 1055—1061. Břetislav was succeeded by his first-born son, Spytihněv II, who is known in history as "the Protector of Widows and Orphans".

Vratislav II, the First King of Bohemia, 1061—1092. After Spytihněv's short reign, his brother Vratislav took his place. Until this time, the rulers of Bohemia had been only lords or princes. In 1085, Vratislav won for himself the royal title, the title of "King of Bohemia and Poland". Vratislav won this distinction by aiding Henry IV of Germany in that monarch's struggles against the Saxons and against the Pope, the stern Gregory VII, who tried to renew the rigorous old order in the Church. Probably at this time the German King gave the Czech lords the right to serve at the table of the Holy Roman Emperor. This office later carried with it the Elector's right, that is a voice in the election of the German monarch (the Holy Roman Emperor).

In the time of Vratislav II there lived in Bohemia a distinguished painter, sculptor, and engraver, Božetěch by name, who, being Abbot of the monastery at Sázava, played an important part in its rise and growing fame.

Disputes over the Czech Throne. After the death of Vratislav II, his successors were again merely lords. Many of them were able men but they brought the country ill fortune, for they were continually engaged in dynastic struggles. In these difficult times, in 1108, Lord Svatopluk gave the order that the entire family of the Vršovci should be destroyed root and branch. His order was carried out to the letter. No one was spared: even infants in arms were massacred. A new hope for better times did not dawn until 1125, when after the death of Vladislav I, Soběslav I became lord.

The Glory and the Humiliation of Bohemia.

Kosmas (?—1125). In the period of bitter feuds and struggles over the throne there lived a canon of the Church of Praha whose

name was Kosmas. Kosmas began to write tales and fables that had come down to him from olden times. He also wrote down what his contemporaries had lived through and had recounted to him, and what he himself had witnessed, calling his work "The Bohemian Chronicle". Kosmas was the first Czech historian, and his masterpiece forms the most important source we have today for the study of early Czech history. Though he wrote in the Latin tongue, he made no secret of his patriotism and his dislike for foreigners, who were gaining more and more power at the expense of his countrymen. Kosmas observed with sorrow that his country was perishing under the weight of expensive dynastic quarrels, and therefore rejoiced to see the strong Soběslav I become lord.

Soběslav I, 1125—1140. Of the many virtues for which the new lord was noted, Kosmas valued most his temperance, for Soběslav never touched a drop of mead, that alcoholic "thief of wisdom". Soběslav had a cousin, Oto the Black, also known as Otík, who plotted to oust the new ruler and assume his place. Oto gained the support of the Holy Roman Emperor, Lothair I, but both Oto and Lothair suffered a crushing defeat in the battle of Chlumec (near Teplice) in north-western Bohemia. Oto was killed and Lothair taken prisoner. Soběslav later made peace with the German, and let him return to his own country. To celebrate his victory, the Czech lord renovated a church on the memorable hill, Mount Říp. The church was dedicated to St George, and was circular in shape.

Vladislav II, 1140—1172. Soběslav's successor was his nephew, Vladislav II, who had to fight bitterly to defeat rival claimants and assert his right to rule.

The Crusades. In the days of Vratislav, all the Christian nations of Europe were filled with hatred for the Turks, who had just seized the Holy Land. The Turks angered Christendom by robbing and torturing pious Christians who made pilgrimages to places sacred to Christianity. From all sides came a call to arms against the infidel Turks. Those who promised their aid bore a large red cross sewn on their garments as the symbol that they would fight for a holy cause. Therefore they were called Crusaders, and their expeditions the Crusades. At first, in 1096, undisciplined bands hastened to Palestine, led on by the hope of abundant spoils of war, plundering and pillaging as they went. These uninvited guests

also passed through Czech lands, baptized and robbed Jews at Praha, and did much damage.

Crusaders actually gained control of Jerusalem and Palestine for a time. But soon afterwards, the Holy Land again fell into the hands of the Turks. A new call for crusaders followed. In 1147 the Czech lord, Vladislav, obeyed this call and left for Turkey, accompanied by an armed band. But his ranks were soon thinned, for his men succumbed to the strange climate, the hardships of travel, and the attacks of enemies. Therefore Vladislav gave the remnants of his force to the French king, Louis VII, and returned home, founding the famous Zion monastery on Strahov Hill, Praha.

Vladislav as King. Vladislav lived on good terms with his German neighbours and performed inestimable services for Frederic Barbarossa in the latter's struggle with the Italian city, Milan, and with the Pope. When Milan refused to obey Frederic, about ten thousand Czech soldiers voluntarily made their way south as allies of the German Emperor. They crossed the Alps without mishap, but their further progress was blocked by the high waters of the river Adda. Czechs and Germans were standing helpless before the flooded river, when two Czech noblemen, Odolen Strážovic and Bernard Soběslavovic, cast themselves into the torrent and swam across. King Vladislav, hearing of this heroic deed, ordered the drummers to beat their drums; thus giving the signal for the whole camp to stand to attention. The king then called to his army, "As these two have crossed, so can thousands of others!" and he threw himself into the foaming river at the head of his men, who all followed suit. Two hundred Czechs met their deaths in the malevolent waves, but the rest reached the opposite shore in safety. Taking the Milanese by surprise, they defeated them. Then the victorious heroes helped the Germans build a bridge across the river, so that Frederic's men could join them.

The Czechs proved successful during the course of this war upon more than one occasion, and their reputation grew until they were credited with many fabulous feats. Vladislav himself killed the leader of Milan in a hand-to-hand combat. In return for all this Czech help, Frederic made Vladislav king in 1158*), and provided that all his successors should be kings for ever. In contrast to the

* The German Emperor crowned Vladislav with a crown which he had received some time before from the King of England.

time when Vratislav II had been made king, the title was to be not individual, but hereditary to Czech rulers. Vladislav adopted a new emblem. Formerly Bohemia's emblem had been a black eagle with red flames issuing from its bill. Vladislav substituted for it a crowned lion, silver in hue, on a red background.

New Struggles over the Czech Throne. Vladislav, wishing to insure the throne for his son, Bedřich (Frederic), abdicated in his favour; but since the change in rulers was made without the consent of Frederic Barbarossa, Bedřich was deposed and Soběslav II took his place. Soběslav was derisively called "the Peasant Lord" by the Czech nobility, by reason of his love for the common people. Soběslav in truth ruled only as lord and was not crowned king. Barbarossa forgot his highsounding promise that Bohemia should be a kingdom for ever, forgot all that King Vladislav had done for him, and was pleased to see Vladislav and his son fallen from power. Unhappy times for the Czech lands ensued. The German Emperor decided who should rule in Bohemia, weakened the Czech lords at his pleasure, and continued to make his influence more and more felt in Bohemia as time went on. Moravia was separated from Bohemia, and the Emperor, making it a margraviate, placed it under his own direct supervision. Moravia acquired for its emblem an eagle with its head turned to the right, wearing a golden crown; (later the eagle was coloured red and white chequerwise). During the time of these dynastic struggles the country lived through a period of humiliation and disgrace.

Life in Old Bohemia.

The Lord and his Officials. The throne was hereditary in the Přemyslide family. When a lord died, the Bohemian nobles, whose positions were also hereditary, went through the formality of electing his successor. The nation as a whole had no right to object to the ruler chosen, but had to accept him blindly. The new ruler passed through a special ceremony of acceptance of office. Arrayed in princely garments, he surveyed Přemysl's woven shoes and bag as these were exhibited to him. He was then escorted to a special stone chair of state in the castle of Praha and introduced to the people. Then he visited the Holy Roman Emperor, who recognized him as lord, and gave Bohemia into his safe-keeping as a fief. This meant that while the lord was master in his country, he was

in certain respects responsible to the Emperor; in feudal parlance, he was the Emperor's vassal.

Other members of the Přemyslide family received as fiefs sections of Bohemia, which they were to control under the lord's supervision; in other words, they were the lord's vassals, just as he was the Emperor's vassal. Other Přemyslides became church dignitaries (bishops, archbishops, patriarchs), while the women of the ruling family, if they did not marry, entered convents and often became abbesses.

In olden days the Czechoslovak lands were inhabited by various Slavonic tribes and clans. The lord ruling in the central part of Bohemia, with his capital at Praha, gradually gained control over them. Later the whole country was divided into districts. At the head of each district stood an appointed official, called the *kmet* (count) in Bohemia, the *župan* (prefect) in Slovakia. He cared for public safety, persecuted criminals, and was a military commander. The chief judge in each district was the *sudí* (bailiff), who had another official, the executioner, always near at hand. The chief judge of the whole land was the lord himself. He had many officers to help him in his administrative work, and these in time became nobles. Some took care of his estates, others of his forests, still others collected his taxes for him. They received titles, estates, castles and other rewards for their services.

The Freemen. Side by side with the growing power of these officials and nobles, other free inhabitants were disappearing: only the *zemané* (country gentlemen) kept something of their significance.

The Serfs. Most of the population was subservient. The more wide-spread agriculture became, the greater grew the need for field labour. The lord and the nobility, the bishops and the heads of monasteries founded estates with extensive fields. Men who had been taken as prisoners of war were enslaved and forced to cultivate these fields. Since Christian teachings do not approve of slavery, the number of slaves diminished while the need for agricultural labourers increased.

The common people were growing poorer and poorer. In order to secure protection from invading enemies and a means of subsistence, they met the nobility's demand for labour by becoming serfs. They were forced to work on the *dominikál*,* as the lands

* From the Latin *dominus* — master.

of the nobility were called. For the labour done on the noble's soil, the peasant would receive a field, the *rustikál*, to be worked as he wished; in other cases, peasants might receive a piece of forest-land, which they cleared, founding a settlement on it. The peasants were known as colonists, and the land they received was called a *grunt*. In no case was the *grunt* their property. It was always loaned to them, and the noble who had granted it remained its owner and their personal master as well.

The peasants had to make their lord money-payments, or, more often, payments from the produce of the soil, which were known as *naturalia*. Besides, they had to perform labour (*robota*) on the fields and forests of the *dominikál*. In some places there were special tasks that had to be done for the lord: for example, horse-shoeing, the making of various articles such as baskets, coats-of-arms, wheels, and soap. It is interesting to note traces of these duties which have survived until the present in the names of certain villages: *Kovary* (*kovář* = blacksmith); *Košíře* (*koš* = basket); *Štítary* (*štit* = coat-of-arms); *Koloděje* (*kolo* = wheel); *Mydlovary* (*mýdlo* = soap, *vařiti* = to boil), and many others.

The noble protected his serfs in times of need, rewarded and punished them, and gave his consent to their marriages; in short, he was supposed to care for them as a father cares for his family. In time the slaves, insofar as any remained, bettered their situation; it happened more than once that a bright serf drew attention to his talents and acquired an important position near the lord himself. But this was exceptional. In general, the position of the serfs was far from enviable. Their lives were filled with labour and hardship, with very few pleasures and no luxuries. Besides the work on their own "*grunt*", and the labours they owed their masters, there was the special "*robota*" to be performed for the state. This meant that they had to build and repair roads, bridges, and castles. They had to provide meat for the lord's attendants when these came into the vicinity.

Guests. Besides native "colonists" or serfs, many immigrants came from the neighbouring Germany to settle in Bohemian lands. They were known as *hosté*, i. e. guests. The nobility granted them lands in return for a fixed annual money payment.

Trade. Even in early times trade was developing favourably. Unfortunately, it was controlled almost altogether by foreigners,

especially Jews, Italians, Frenchmen, and Germans. The greatest centres of trade grew around the castles, for example at Praha and Vyšehrad, where many craftsmen made their homes. These centres became in time prosperous towns. Trade flourished also in those villages that had the right to hold annual or weekly fairs. Such villages were known as "market villages". Trade was aided by state roads, which were protected by special guards, called *chodové* (*choditi* = to walk). Even some water-ways were being developed and used. Bohemia continued to import salt, weapons, glass and tapestries, and exported furs, linen, honey, wax, and horses, much as it had in the early days of Slav settlement. The older popular currency, linen, was replaced by silver talents and later by domestic and foreign dinars. Gold, silver, and other metals were mined in Bohemia in ever-increasing quantities.

Intellectual Life. The monasteries deserved the greatest credit for the diffusion of Christianity. Certain Christians who were dissatisfied with human society, left a sinful world and sought refuge in forests. As hermits or monks (which name comes from a Greek word meaning "solitary"), they spent their lives in prayer and meditation. Their mode of life attracted others of kindred tastes to join them. The hermits therefore began to form groups, organized themselves into societies, and regulated their activities according to certain set rules. These groups were then known as orders, the monks as regular clergy. They chose an authority, the abbot, to rule over them as a father.

Certain sets of rules were so successful, that their adoption by groups of monks was widespread. The oldest and most important order to take root in Bohemia was the Benedictine order, which had originated in Italy and was named after its founder, St Benedict. The Slavonic monastery at Sázava was organized according to the Benedictine rules. The Benedictine monks were called "the black monks" because they wore a black dress. Later other orders grew to prominence in Bohemia: the Premonstratensians, or "white monks", whose order was founded in France in 1120, were introduced into Bohemia by Vladislav II, when he founded the monastery of Mount Zion at Strahov; the Cistercians, or "grey monks", had their first Czech monastery at Sedlec, (later Kutná Hora); the Dominicans and Franciscans, who were known as the "begging orders", since they gave up all worldly goods and lived on alms, also found a favourable field in Bohemian lands.

Even the knightly order of St John of Jerusalem, which originated in Palestine for the purpose of protecting pilgrims, penetrated to Bohemia.

A monastery was a blessing to the whole neighbourhood. The monks cleared forests, brought swamp-land under cultivation, founded gardens and vineyards. They devoted themselves to arts and crafts; music, painting, sculpture and architecture flourished among them.



Fig. 7. The Round Chapel, Znojmo.

They copied books and wrote chronicles, illuminating them masterfully with tiny representations of blossoms and leaves and even people as is seen, for example, in the Vyšehrad Codex, dating back to the end of the eleventh century.

The precious paintings in the chapel at Znojmo, which show us Libuše's envoys greeting Přemysl in his field, were executed by monks of this period. The monasteries exerted their most far-reaching cultural influence through their schools. Here young priests were educated, learning arithmetic, geometry, music, and



Fig. 8. Wall paintings in the Round Tower, Znojmo. (The top picture shows the coming of Libuše's messengers to Přemysl the Ploughman).

astronomy, as well as subjects more directly connected with religion. The instruction in these schools was given in Latin.

Schools were established not only in monasteries, but by the side of certain churches as well, for example, at Budeč, and at the church of St Vitus, Praha. If a man had a longing for some

higher education, he had to seek it in foreign lands, and even there the store of learning was comparatively small at this time. As a result few people devoted themselves to the acquisition of learning, and even priests were not very educated.

Generous Czech rulers made numerous gifts to Church institutions. The clergy, however, only enjoyed the use of what the lord had granted them while it continued to be lord's property. Besides the ruler, many of the nobles had



Fig. 9. A country church in the Romanesque style.

favourite churches or monasteries, to which they made presents. Oftentimes a noble endowed a church, with the provision that priests of that church should pray for the salvation of their benefactor's soul. This type of endowment was known as the "záduši" (duše = soul). The clergy also received tithes from their parishioners, that is, they had one tenth of all the produce of the soil. Thus the clergy grew wealthy. It was natural, therefore, that with its material prosperity on the increase, the Church should wish to get rid of the lord's supreme control over its property. After a long struggle, the Church actually freed itself from the State's supervision.

At this time, architecture was developing favourably in Czech lands. Wooden churches gradually gave way to structures of stone and brick. Small round chapels, "rotundas" like the Holy Cross at Praha, St Martin at Vyšehrad, St George on Říp, the chapel at Znojmo, were early favourites. These rotundas and later spacious churches belong to the Romanesque style of architecture, which originated in Italy. The chief features of this style are the semi-circular doors and windows. Of these oldest Czech Churches very little has been preserved.

CHAPTER III.

Early Days of the Kingdom of Bohemia.

Two Přemyslide Kings.

Přemysl Otakar I (1197—1230). The disastrous feuds among the Přemyslides ended when Přemysl Otakar I became lord. The new ruler steered the ship of his country safely into a more glorious period. Making use of the dynastic struggles that were going on in Germany, he regained for himself the royal title, and for Bohemia the advantages of a kingdom. The honour was conferred on Bohemia in 1212, by the Golden Bull (edict) of Sicily (so called because it bore the seal of the Kingdom of Sicily.) In this document, the German King Frederic II declared the royal title hereditary in Bohemia. Further, he promised to recognize as King of Bohemia only that ruler who should be elected by the Czechs themselves. In return for these favours he demanded that whenever a King of Germany was to be crowned Holy Roman Emperor, the King of Bohemia should send 300 knights to Rome, or, failing this, he should send 300 talents of silver.

Přemysl Otakar married twice. Among other children, he had by his first wife a daughter, Markéta (Margaret), who married Valdemar, King of Denmark; she became a true mother to her second country, and was so well beloved, that the Danish called her Dagmar, "Lady of the Day". Přemysl Otakar and his second wife, a Hungarian princess, had a daughter, Anežka (Agnes), who was engaged to be married to King Frederic II; but the German, who felt only disdain for her, deserted her. Sorely wounded, the young princess refused the hand of an English prince, and entered the convent of St George at Praha. So great was her virtue that she was soon regarded as saint.

Václav I (1230—1253). Václav, son of Přemysl Otakar I, was chosen king even during his father's lifetime. At his coronation,

the ancient customs connected with the taking of the office of ruler were already disregarded.

King Václav was an energetic and brave monarch, patron of the arts and lover of splendour. Inviting prominent guests and musicians to visit him, he held a gay and luxurious court. He was very fond of the chase; once, while pursuing his favourite sport, he lost an eye, and is therefore known in history as Václav the One-eyed.

At the beginning of Václav's reign, all Europe was frightened by the incursions of a new race of Asiatic nomads, the Tartars or Mongols. Gaining possession of the whole of Southern Russia, they overran Poland and Silesia, and were getting ready to strike at Bohemia. Václav prepared in time to defend his country, and ordered all frontier roads to be closed by a barricade of giant trees, felled for the purpose, which, laid across the path, blocked the way. The Tartars therefore gave up all idea of attacking Bohemia. Passing through Silesia, they invaded Moravia instead, and laid it waste. Then they retreated to Hungary, and later returned to Southern Russia.

The last years of Václav's life were embittered by disputes with his son, Přemysl Otakar, whom he had entrusted with the government of Moravia. While these quarrels were going on, Václav, the great defender of his country, lover of gaiety and luxury, true representative of medieval chivalry, passed away.

Life in the Castle. A proud castle was the boast of every part of the country, of every district in Czechoslovak lands. Where formerly many a powerful master stood surveying from his stronghold his fields, forests, and villages, today for the most part only ruins remain. Only a few crumbling walls serve to remind us that here long ago was the lively centre of the community.

Nobles lived in castles, petty country gentlemen (*zemané*) in more modest manor-houses. Castles were usually built on steep and rocky hills or in places rendered secure from attack by surrounding waters; ramparts, ditches, and walls gave it further protection. A powerful tower or donjon rose high above the rest of the castle, serving as the master's last refuge, when the enemy had taken possession of the other castle buildings. Near the tower stood the palace, where the nobleman and his family lived. Besides a large dining apartment, the palace contained a hall, in which were held balls, feasts, and other celebrations.

Life in the castle was simple, and the diet monotonous. Barley porridge, cheese, bread, peas, beans, and lentils formed a substantial part of the bill of fare, though there was no scarcity of fish and meat, especially venison. Food was cooked in clay or metal pots over the open fire.

Furniture was plain, and there was little of it. Weapons decorated the walls, which were lined with chests for clothing and linen. Near the fireplace, which was built in every room, there usually stood an oaken table. Under it a bear-skin was spread. Only people of high birth slept in beds: the rest slept on the bare floor, on straw, or on furs. Feather-beds came into use only much later. Rooms were dark and badly ventilated. Since glass was extremely precious, wooden shutters often took its place in windows. The wood fires did not radiate much heat even at best. The cold, gloomy chambers were illuminated by torches; later by primitive, smoking oil-lamps. It is no wonder that the inhabitants of a castle looked forward to the coming of spring.

Besides the palace, the castle also had a dwelling-place for the servants, barns, stables, a chapel, and a prison. A well was never lacking in the courtyard. A special guard, who lived in the tower, was ever on the look-out, in order that the castle might not be surprised by the enemy. The castle was not only the home of the master, his family, and his servants, for when enemies were threatening the neighbourhood, it afforded protection within its walls to all the serfs as well.

When the weather was good, the nobleman and his followers rode out on horseback into the country or visited his neighbours. The noble's chief recreation was the chase, with hounds and falcons. He was also fond of tournaments. This form of amusement was one in which only knights could take part.

Knighthood. Nobody was born a knight. Knighthood was an honour, which every nobleman had to earn for himself. When a boy of noble birth was seven years old, he became a page, that is, he was sent to some neighbouring knight to be trained. There he learnt knightly customs and usage, and the etiquette of chivalry. He had to perform various tasks for his lord and lady with prescribed courtly grace. He practised riding, learnt how to handle a sword, bow and arrows, and lance, and to protect himself with his shield. At fourteen or fifteen years of age, the boy was advanced to the rank of squire. He now attended to the arms and

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the horse of his lord, and accompanied him to the hunt and to war. If he conducted himself honourably and showed bravery in battle, at twenty-one he was made a knight.

The ceremony of conferring knighthood was a significant one. The young man who was to be knighted prepared for his new rank by fasting and prayer, by confession and Holy Communion. When the great day arrived, he went to church, at the head of a solemn procession. Before the altar he vowed that he would always speak the truth, uphold justice, defend the Church and its servants, and show respect to women. He pledged himself to take up the cause of widows, orphans, and all who were being persecuted and who suffered, and to fight unbelief and heresy. Then he was dressed in knightly armour, a sword was suspended at his side, and spurs were attached to his heels. Then his feudal lord, maybe the king of the realm himself, came to him, and dubbed him a Knight, striking him three hard blows with hand or sword, in order that the youth might ever keep in mind what duties he was taking upon himself with knighthood. The new knight was an expert with the sword and the spear, but he could neither read nor write.

The knight in full armour could walk only with difficulty, and needed help in mounting his horse.

The usual military costume of the knight consisted of a leather coat worn next to the body, and over this a long-sleeved hauberk, a tunic of interlinked iron rings, to which was attached a hood drawn over the head and covering the mouth. A skull-cap of iron was worn under this hood. Helms which left only slits for the eyes and mouth were put on over the mail hood before the fight. The surcoat, a garment suspended from the waist and reaching below the knees, and iron greaves, worn on the legs, formed other items of the knight's costume. The garments worn by the knight were many, and the fashions continued to change with methods of warfare. The knights paid attention not only to the usefulness of their armour in battle, but also to luxury and beauty. They decorated their helmets with feathers, and wore velvet robes embroidered with gold and precious stones. Their horses, when not protected with special armour, had beautiful covers bearing their masters' coats-of-arms.

Knights were distinguished from each other by their heraldic insignia, their coats-of-arms. Thus the shield of each knight bore a rose, a star, a lion, or some other symbol, by which it could be determined what family he hailed from.

A characteristic amusement of the high-born in the Middle Ages was the tournament or tourney. Great splendour on the one hand and ceremonious formality on the other were to be seen in these games, usually arranged by powerful noblemen. The tournament was a contest in the arts of war between two groups of knights in full armour. It tried both the skill and the courage of the combatants. Victory consisted in throwing one's rival from his horse. The chief victor was he who defeated all his rivals. Only then, at the wish of the ladies present, did he lift his helm and show his face to the assembled company,

and receive his reward — a ring, a gold chain, or a sword, as the case might be — from the hand of the fairest lady present.

In Václav's time originated the custom of designating a noble family by the name of the castle in which he lived. There were, for example, the lords of Stráž, of Peruc, and so on. As families were named according to their castles, the castles themselves were oftentimes named in accordance with the emblems of their owners. Since at that time the German language was being used more and more at the court, it became fashionable for noblemen to give their castles German names, such as Löwenberg, Sternberg, Rosenberg, as their coats-of-arms boasted a lion, a star, or a rose.

After the tournament, guests were invited to a feast in the great dining-hall. Choice courses of meats, fish, and sweets were set before them. They ate soups and gravies with spoons, used a crust of bread instead of a fork in eating vegetables, and ate meat with their fingers. Wine flowed freely at such a feast, and the general gaiety was heightened by music, singing, and coarse jokes. The victorious knight was the hero of the hour, and wandering minstrels, singing to the accompaniment of harp or lyre, carried his fame far and wide into the country by their songs about his skill and prowess.

Minstrels earned their living by passing from castle to castle, and were warmly welcomed everywhere, for in those days, when no newspapers or magazines existed, their songs and especially their gossip helped to relieve the monotony of castle life. They chanted of recent deeds of bravery, of significant political events, of beautiful weddings, of bitter feuds and quarrels, or of the latest scandals.

Noblemen as well as their servants also welcomed the wandering juggler, whose tricks and jokes delighted them, and the piper, whose music, inciting young and old to dance, made them all forget their cares.

In later times, the word "knight" (rytíř) acquired a new meaning in Bohemia. Knights came to constitute a special lower class of nobility, to be distinguished from the higher group of lords (páni — "masters"); the higher nobility (the lords) and the lower nobility (the knights) represented the Czech nation. The Middle Class (traders, business men) and the peasants were not yet considered to be an integral part of the nation.

Foreigners in Czechoslovak Lands.

Foreign Agricultural Labourers. King Václav and his successors allowed great numbers of Germans to settle in the forests of the Bohemian borderland, and change the woods into fields. Thus many German villages arose on Czech soil.

Foreign Miners. Not only the fertile agricultural land, but also the great mineral wealth of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia, brought an influx of foreigners into the country. Foreign miners settled in the mining towns in Bohemia (in Stříbro, which means “silver”, in Kutná Hora, which means “Mountain with mines”), in Jihlava, in Štávnice, Kremnice, and Bystrice in Slovakia.

Foreigners in Towns. German merchants and craftsmen also immigrated to the Bohemian Kingdom, and settled in the towns that were being founded at the time.

The Rise of Towns.

Types of Towns. There were several sorts of towns in the Kingdom of Bohemia: (1) Those founded by the King on his domain were called “Royal Towns”, (Klatovy, Žatec, Plzeň, Budějovice, Brno, Opava, Bratislava, Trnava, belonged to this group); (2) Those from which the Queen enjoyed special revenue, (Mělník, Hradec Králové, Jaroměř; (3) The mining towns, such as Kutná Hora, Německý Brod, Jihlava, formed a special category; (4) Certain towns were founded by nobles and high churchmen, with the King’s consent, (Rakovník, Litomyšl, Příbor). In no circumstances are towns, founded as such, even when small, to be confused with large villages.

Many towns were founded in the period under consideration. The new towns, being given various privileges by the King, and profiting by the inflow of a foreign population, grew rapidly in size and in wealth.

Privileges. Among town privileges was a right to hold fairs, the prohibition of the practice of certain trades within a league of the town to prevent competition with the town craftsmen, and the right of self-government.

Administration. The town was administered by a body of twelve councillors (konšelé); these officials took turns as head of the council, (primátor), each enjoying this privilege for a period of one month. Supreme authority in town was vested in the bailiff (rychtář), who was the chief judge. The bailiff was elected by the citizens themselves.

The towns were a source of considerable revenue to their founders, who received substantial sums from the sale and rent of land and the administration of justice, and collected payment for the renewal of the town charter, which guaranteed the town its

privileges. Foreign traders who did business in the town were forced to pay a special tax, of which the proceeds were also enjoyed by the town's founder or his descendants.

Appearance. A medieval town was small. A high wall and a deep ditch filled with water surrounded it to render it secure from attack by enemies. Houses were low, built for the most part of wood, and with arcades. Streets were narrow and unpaved. Each town had a square or market-place, where the fairs were held. There were shops in front of some houses, barns and cellars at the back. Townsfolk in general lived modestly.

The Iron King, the Golden King.

Přemysl Otakar II (1253—1278). After the death of Václav, his son, Přemysl Otakar II, became king. The new monarch soon regained for himself the castles and estates which his father had given to favourites and creditors. Little did he care that by so doing he made himself unpopular with the Czech nobility.

To gain the approval of Rome, the young king led an expedition against the Prussians, who were still pagans. He won an overwhelming victory over them, but treated them with such mildness and kindness that, by his example, he won them over to Christianity. Before leaving them, he founded the city of Königsberg in their land on the Baltic.

While still Margrave of Moravia, Přemysl Otakar had married Margaret, sister of the Duke of Austria, Frederic the Belligerent. Upon the death of her brother in 1246, Margaret inherited the Austrian lands, including Styria; but Styria had been taken possession of by Bela IV, King of Hungary. Therefore hostilities broke out between Přemysl Otakar and Bela, and a battle was fought at Kressenburg, near the place where the river Morava flows into the Danube. Přemysl Otakar won such a great victory, due mainly to the aid of his "iron knights" (so called because of the heavy iron armour which they wore), that thenceforth he was known to his enemies as "the Iron King". At the same time, because of his wealth, his generosity and his kindness of heart, he was also called "the Golden King".

Přemysl Otakar's kingdom grew by leaps and bounds. He had conquered Styria, and soon afterwards inherited neighbouring Alpine lands, so that his possessions stretched as far as the Adriatic Sea.

He had to give up his Alpine possessions to Rudolph, who, wishing to secure for the Habsburgs a claim to the Bohemian throne, negotiated the marriages of his daughter Guta with Přemysl Otakar's son, Václav, and of his son Rudolf with Václav's sister Anežka (Agnes).

Peace between the two neighbours did not last long. Both sides soon began to get ready for another war and sought allies. Rudolf found an ally in the King of Hungary, while Přemysl turned to Poland for aid. The Pope, becoming the Bohemian king's enemy, excommunicated him (which meant that he could no longer enjoy the blessings of the sacraments, and that all pious Christians would shun contact with him — a severe punishment in those days).

A famous proclamation (*Manifest*) was sent by Přemysl Otakar to Poland in which he called on Polish lords, knights, and common people to come to his aid. He drew attention to the fact that Poles and Bohemians spoke the same language, lived next door to one another, were nearly related and had a common enemy — Germany — ever ambitious and greedy for conquest.

The second war between Přemysl and Rudolf broke out in the heat of the summer in the year 1278. On August 26, on the so-called Moravian Field in Lower Austria, Přemysl Otakar precipitated a battle, which was to be decisive to Bohemian power and honour. The King fought bravely, but, hurled from his horse in the thick of the battle, he was killed in the midst of his faithful companions, and his armies suffered a crushing defeat. The Poles supported him bravely to the last, even when the rest of his men were on the retreat.

The terrible news of his defeat and death spread over his land with lightning speed. His passing was mourned in the huts of the poor as well as in the royal palace, for by his kindness and goodwill he had gained for himself a place in the hearts of the humblest of his subjects.

The Brandenburgs in Bohemia.

Rudolf of Habsburg, it seemed, wished to get control of the rich inheritance that Přemysl Otakar II had left to his son Václav. The Austrian occupied Moravia and was preparing to invade Bohemia, but his plans met with the objections of the Bohemian nobility. Therefore he gave up his idea of taking Bohemia by force, and plotted to gain control of it by marriage. Having reached an agreement with the Czech lords, and being guardian of the youthful

King Václav II, the Emperor appointed Oto of Brandenburg, Václav's cousin, administrator of Bohemia and tutor to the young king.

The period of Brandenburg regency was a difficult and cruel one. The regent brought bands of hired soldiers (mercenaries) into the country, who, following their master's example, robbed churches and monasteries, and pillaged towns and villages. They took whatever appealed to them and was valuable.

The lot of the Bohemians was made even more difficult to bear by other calamities: bad harvests brought starvation, and in the wake of famine came the pestilence, the dreaded Black Death of the Middle Ages. Great numbers of people, weakened by want, fell a prey to the disease. No wonder that "O Svatý Václave", the hymn of prayer for better times, began to resound in the unhappy country!

The Czechs looked for their salvation to Václav, the young heir to the throne, whom Oto kept prisoner at Bezděz (in Northern Bohemia) and later Brandenburg. The Czech nobility twice paid Oto the enormous ransom of 15,000 talents of silver, but the regent did not give up his young prisoner. Not until the legal period of regency had passed and the Bohemians had given him control of certain Czech castles and towns (in place of a new 20,000 talent ransom), did Oto set the king free. Václav's return to Bohemia was greeted with great rejoicing, and a new song of welcome, "Thou hast come the long desired!" resounded over the country.

The Most Powerful Přemyslide.

Záviš of Falkenštejn. During the period of his captivity, King Václav had suffered from privations of both body and mind. His education had been sorely neglected, but he soon made up for lost time. The kingdom, too, recovered quickly from depression. That Bohemia's misery was so early overcome was due in large part to the wise counsels of Záviš of Falkenštejn. This nobleman had married the Queen-widow, Kunhuta, mother of King Václav, and came to exert a good and powerful influence over the young king.

The friendship between Václav and his step-father cooled after Kunhuta's death. Their relations became strained because Queen Guta, Václav's wife, hated Záviš. Therefore he left the royal castle, and went to live in Hungary. There he married a Hungarian princess. After a time, a son was born to him. Remembering his old friendship, Záviš came to Praha to invite the king to be the baby's godfather.

Guta persuaded Václav that the invitation was only an excuse, and that Závěš was plotting against Václav's life. Although the accusation was false, Václav had his step-father arrested and imprisoned. When the latter's numerous and powerful relatives refused obedience to the King, Václav, at a loss, decided to follow the unchivalrous advice of his brother-in-law, Rudolf of Habsburg. He compelled the unfortunate Závěš, accompanied by a strong force, to make a round of his relatives' castles pronouncing in each case this ultimatum:

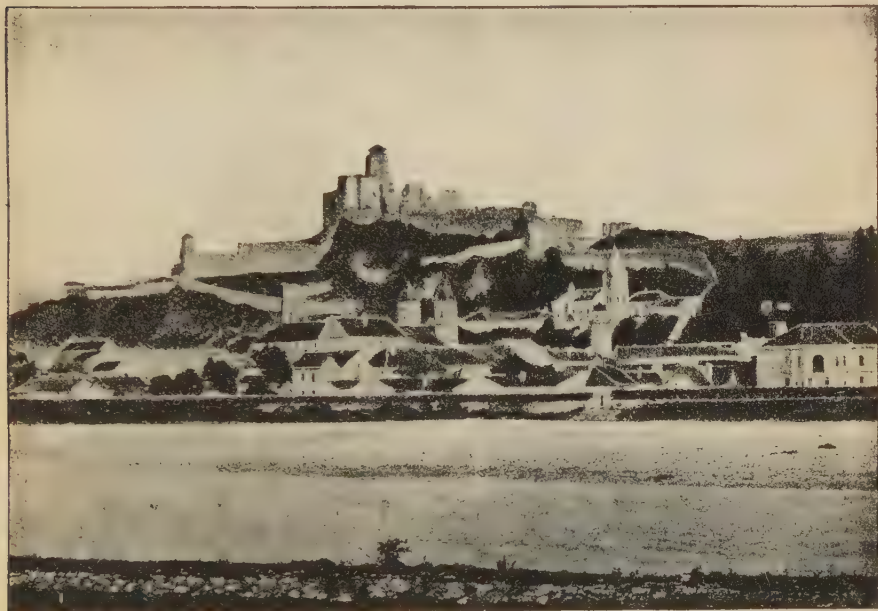


Fig. 11. Castle and town, Trenčín, Slovakia.

either the rebel must surrender, or the prisoner must be killed. At last the sad procession came to Hluboká, in southern Bohemia, the stronghold of Vítěk, the brother of Závěš. Vítěk refused to give up his castle. Václav therefore carried out his threat, and Závěš had his head cut off. Grateful for having escaped from the clutches of Závěš, Václav built a monastery at Zbraslav and, to atone for his sin, he later added a church thereto.

Václav's Rule. Under Václav's administration the wealth of the country increased. Václav enjoyed the benefits of increased production in the rich silver mines of Kutná Hora, while the town of Kutná Hora soon equalled Praha itself in wealth. Václav's great

opulence was apparent in 1297 from the splendour of his coronation ceremony.

Soon afterwards, in 1300, Václav began to issue coins; namely, the so-called *groš*; and a larger unit of currency the *kopa*, sixty times the value of the *groš*. One *kopa* coin and four *groš* coins were made from one talent (*hřivna*) of silver. The new pieces of money were round, whitish, and attractive. On one side was the



Fig. 12. The Empire of Václav II.

image of a lion, with the Latin inscription "*Groš pragensis*" while on the other side it read: "*Václav II z boží milosti král český*", which means "*Václav II, by the grace of God King of Bohemia*". This currency was valid all over Europe.

Václav soon found what education meant to a people, and made plans for the establishment of an institution of higher learning at Praha; but the nobility looked with disfavour upon this scheme, fearing that if children from middle class and peasant families acquired an education, the noblemen's monopoly in office-holding

would be lost. The nobility also frustrated the king's plans for giving judges over the whole country a uniform code of law, to do away with arbitrary practices, so that of all Václav's imposing judicial plans only a code of law for mining towns took effect. This code of law, practically intact, was adopted by Hungary.

King Václav's rights as Elector of the Holy Roman Empire were again recognized. So great was his influence that, due to his objections, the son of Rudolf of Habsburg, Albrecht, a coarse and unpopular man, was not elected Holy Roman Emperor upon his father's death. Albrecht gained the crown only later, after reconciliation with Václav and with Václav's consent.

Václav's fame and power grew. Silesian nobles placed themselves under his protection and, when in 1300 the dynasty of the Pjastovci had died out in Poland, King Václav even gained the Polish throne. In the next year, the Hungarian ruling family also died out, and Hungarian nobles, under the leadership of Matouš Čák of Trenčín, offered Václav the crown of Hungary. The Bohemian King, who was ill, did not accept the Magyar offer for himself, but suggested his son Václav in his place. Thus the young prince Václav became King of Hungary. The Pope, Boniface VIII, whose candidate for the Hungarian throne had been the Prince of Naples, Charles Robert of Anjou, objected to Václav's acceptance of the throne and the Magyars themselves did not remain loyal to the ruler they had chosen. Therefore Václav II recalled his son from Hungary.

At this time Albrecht, ungratefully forgetting King Václav's past favours, began to covet the silver mines of Kutná Hora. He demanded that Václav should let him enjoy all benefits from these mines for a period of six years, or pay him a lump sum of 80,000 talents of silver, because, he said, the King of Bohemia was obliged to pay the Holy Roman Emperor a ten per cent tax on precious metals mined in Bohemia. Václav refused the demand, and after the Habsburg monarch had vainly tried to take Kutná Hora by force, he had to leave the country in disgrace.

The End of the Přemyslide Dynasty.

Václav III (1305-1306). When Václav II died, he was succeeded by his only son, Václav III. The new king was a gifted but irresponsible youth who gave estates to his favourites with an extra-

vagant hand. Soon he was faced with the possibility of losing Poland, which was being claimed by Vladislav Lokýtek, representative of a minor branch of the Pjast family. The youthful monarch, who had no intention of giving up the Polish throne, placed himself at the head of an expedition and departed for Poland. He never reached his destination, for he was murdered at Olomouc in Moravia on August 4, 1306.

No one knows who the assassin was. Was he the hireling of those Bohemian nobles who feared that the young king would take away again the estates he had given them, or was he the tool of Albert, seeking to insure for himself the Bohemian throne? Whoever did the evil deed, it is certain that the whole Bohemian nation was to suffer for it. The Kingdom of Bohemia, led by the old national dynasty of the Přemyslides, was growing to ever larger proportions, and was acquiring a European significance. The Czech nation was never again to know a ruling house that would be firmly rooted in it and would be in every way a part of it. The significance of the house of the Přemyslides cannot be overestimated. Out of weak, petty provincialities they had succeeded in forming a firm unit, out of a small domain they had built a powerful kingdom, where civilization was in full bloom, a kingdom equal to the greatest states in the world of its time.

CHAPTER IV.

Bohemia under the Rule of Foreign Dynasties.

Habsburg and Carinthian.

After the unexpected death of young King Václav, Bohemia was again in a sad state of confusion, comparable to that which followed the death of Přemysl Otakar II. The Bohemians decided to elect a new king, but they could not agree in their choice. Some wished to elect a nobleman who had married into the Přemyslide family, others favoured Rudolf of Habsburg, son of the Holy Roman Emperor, Albert. Finally, due to pressure from without, the Habsburg party won. The old dream of the Habsburgs was realized, and Rudolf became king.

Rudolf I (1306—1307). The new ruler was very economical. Praha, accustomed to the splendour of a brilliant, generous court, got used to the new order only with difficulty. No wonder that the citizens of Praha scornfully nicknamed Rudolf “*Král Kaše*”, which means “King Porridge”, after the dish which was prepared for him day after day! Rudolf was not accepted universally, and therefore, sword in hand, he tried to force into submission the nobles who opposed him. While besieging Horažďovice in the south of Bohemia, his health, feeble from the first, broke down completely. He died, the first “winter king” of Bohemia, that is, the first king to rule less than a year.

Henry of Carinthia (1307—1310). Upon Rudolf's death, the Czech nobility again met to elect a new king. According to the terms of a treaty with Albert, Rudolf's brother “Frederic the Fair” should have been chosen. This time, however, the Přemyslide party gained the upper hand. Henry of Carinthia, husband of Václav II's elder daughter, Anne, became king.

The choice was not a happy one. The Carinthian was a vindictive man and at the same time a weakling. The unhappy times

of the Brandenburg regency seemed to have returned. Matters were made worse by a struggle which broke out between the nobility and the newly-rich German townfolk, who sought to equal those of noble birth. Such disorder existed that, it is said, a citizen's life was no longer safe, and even brothers could not trust each other. Certain noblemen began speculating as to whom they could put in the Carinthian's place, and the young princess Eliška (Elizabeth), younger daughter of Václav II, found favour in their eyes. The king and the queen, when they learnt of these plots, oppressed the young princess cruelly.

Meanwhile, in 1308, Albert of Habsburg, the Holy Roman Emperor, had been murdered, and Henry VII, Count of Luxemburg, had been elected Emperor. The Czech nobles, taking up the cause of the young princess, made an agreement with Henry VII, by which his fourteen-year-old son John married princess Elizabeth and was elected King of Bohemia.

Dalimil's Chronicle. The rhymed "Kronika česká" ("Bohemian Chronicle") dates back to these tempestuous times. It is known as "Dalimil's Chronicle", though we do not know who wrote it. Certainly its author was a cultured and a patriotic man, who lamented the passing of good old Bohemian customs and frowned upon foreign importations, such as the tournament, which now grew ever more fashionable. The ancient chronicler saw with sorrow that foreigners were held in high favour in the country, and that their language spread at the expense of the Bohemian tongue. By his writings he sought to awaken the national consciousness.

John of Luxemburg, the Knight-errant King (1310—1346).

The Reign of King John. The nobles had chosen John for their king in hopes of bringing peace and prosperity to the country. They were, however, disappointed in their expectations. The new sovereign's rule brought no blessings to the land. John was gifted and brave, but also irresponsible and extravagant. He left his kingdom for long periods at a time and wandered about abroad, seeking conflicts and adventures. His customs soon gave rise to a saying: "Without God and the King of Bohemia no fight is successful". John was a knight-errant, who came home only when he needed money, which he collected in every possible way. He pawned royal castles and estates, and sold privileges to towns. It is said that he even pawned the crown.

The married life of King John and Queen Elizabeth was far from happy, for they did not understand each other. Elizabeth, remembering her late father's glorious administration, was pained by her husband's incapacity to govern. When on the other hand gossiping courtiers whispered to John that the Queen was plotting to deprive him of his throne and to make Václav, their seven-year-old son, King of Bohemia, the credulous king believed these rumours. Fearing to lose his power, he took the boy away from his mother, and left him in Paris to be educated. There Prince Václav was renamed Charles (Karel), after the King of France and he is known in history by that name. His mother never saw him any more. Her delicate health was destroyed by her husband's cruel conduct, and she died in 1330 in the prime of life.

The kingdom suffered greatly during John's reign. Public officials lacked the force necessary for the carrying out of their duties. Public safety was a thing of the past. The country was infested by brigand-knights, who robbed travellers, traders, and even whole communities. Bad harvests, famine and plague were added to the trials and tribulations which Bohemia suffered.

Charles as King John's Fellow-Ruler. The light of a happier day dawned when King John made his son, Charles, his partner on the throne. The young prince was seventeen years old at the time, and came to Bohemia as a stranger, without friends and without any knowledge of the language. He first went to Zbraslav, to visit his mother's grave. Coming to Praha, he was saddened anew, for he saw misery and suffering on all sides. The royal castle had fallen into such neglect that he was forced to live in a simple middle-class house.

Charles established order in a short time. Old folk who remembered the good old days of Václav II's reign, hoped that the blessings of that period would come back again. They were not to be disappointed. Charles first gave his attention to renovating the castle of Praha, providing work for many of the unemployed. He paid off his father's debts, regaining the castles and estates that John had pawned. In 1344, he brought about the realization of Bohemia's ancient dream: the bishopric of Praha became an archbishopric, with control over the old diocese of Olomouc and the newly established diocese of Litomyšl. The first Archbishop of Praha was Arnošt of Pardubice, a man whose strong physique

and brilliant gifts of mind made him exceptionally well fitted for this office.

The elevation of Praha from the seat of a bishopric to that of an archbishopric was made the occasion for splendid ceremonies. During the celebrations, the corner-stone was laid for the rebuilding of the Church of St Vitus, St Václav, and St Vojtěch. The small and ancient church was to become a great cathedral in the Gothic style.



Fig. 13. Praha Cathedral.

The Gothic style of architecture originated in France in the Middle Ages and was brought to Bohemia in the time of Charles. The leading feature of this style is the broken arch; the ceilings are vaulted in the form of broken arches, the long narrow windows and huge doors are built in the shape of the broken arch. On the outside, two high towers rise above a multitude of graceful, slender, smaller ones.

The French builder, Matthias of Arras, made the plans for the new cathedral, and these plans were carried out by Peter Parlêř of Gmund, who on his mother's side was of Polish blood.

The Growth of the Kingdom. Whatever other qualities of a successful monarch he lacked, the restless King John had one in abundant measure: he was greatly concerned for the expansion of his kingdom. Helping the enemies of the Habsburgs in wars over the German throne, John gained the Cheb district and Upper Lus-

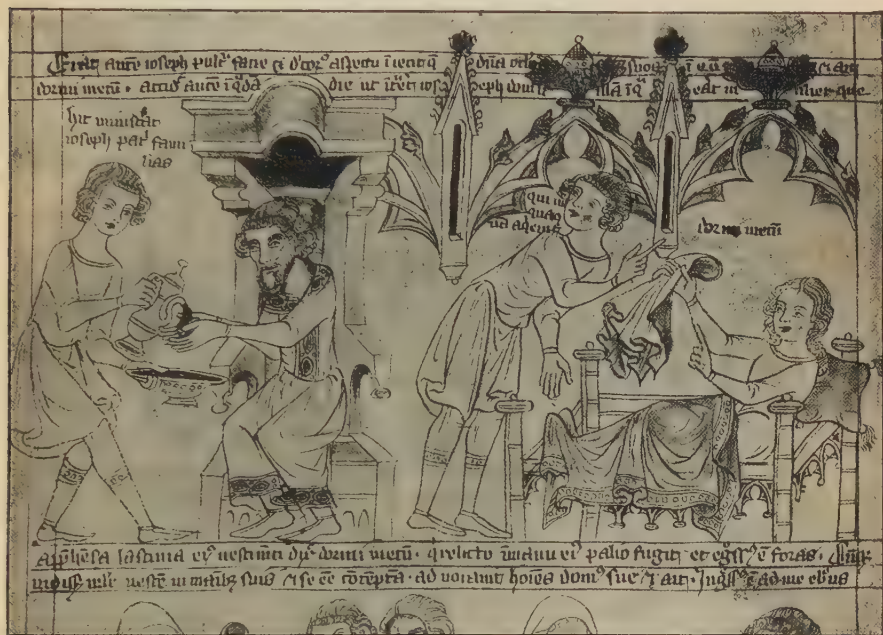


Fig. 14. An illustration from Velislav's Bible.

atia. In 1327, even the nobles of Silesia swore allegiance to him. In 1346 his son Charles was elected Holy Roman Emperor, triumphing over the other candidate, Louis of Bavaria.

The Death of King John. King John had become blind, having lost both eyes in the course of his long, adventurous career. But even with his eyesight gone, John could not bring himself to give up the exciting life of the knight-errant. At that time a bitter struggle, the Hundred Years' War, was raging between France and England. John and Charles stood on the side of France, the country they both loved so well, and took part in person in the decisive

battle of Crecy in 1346. The Czech nobles pleaded in vain with their blind king not to put his life in unnecessary danger. John replied, "Never, God grant, will the King of Bohemia run away from battle".

The Czech nobles, tying John's horse to their own, plunged into the thick of the battle, and made their way to the lines of Edward, the English Prince of Wales, generally known as the Black Prince. John, although he was wounded, fought valiantly on until at last, exhausted from his wounds, he fell from his horse, and died. Charles, too, fought bravely, and his men led him from the field of battle only by force. The Black Prince, bending over the lifeless body of King John, his late enemy, was deeply moved, saying, "Today the crown of knighthood has fallen! Never has there lived a knight who could equal John, the King of Bohemia."

The Father of His Country.

Charles I (1346—1378). Charles was an enlightened monarch, a clever diplomat, an excellent administrator, and an outstanding economist. His remarkable gifts of leadership and the love that he bore to Bohemia enabled him to become the Father of his Country, in the fullest sense of the word. The period of his reign was a Golden Age for the crafts, for trade, for agriculture, and for the development of the arts and sciences.

Craftsmen enjoyed great prosperity. At this time, masters of the various trades organized societies called "craft guilds" for the purpose of protecting their craft from competition and regulating quantities and methods of production, as well as for social purposes.

Under Charles, foreign trade expanded rapidly. Exports such as grain, malt, and hops, floated down the Elbe River out of Bohemia, while luxurious woven cloth, salt, fish, spices and southern fruits were brought into the country. Charles aided peaceful trading by the establishment of order: he rid the land of brigand-knights and bandits. Seizing the castle of Žampach in eastern Bohemia, he passed the death-sentence on its owner, Knight John Pancíř (Smanický). A gold chain, which Charles himself had once given him, was used in hanging this bandit of noble blood.

Charles paid a great deal of attention to agriculture. Many orchards were founded in the vicinity of Praha. The vineyards at

Mělník were expanded and the cultivation of hops was started on a large scale. Fish-hatcheries with adjoining artificial fish ponds were established.

Soon after he became king, Charles made plans for the extension of his capital, Praha, which, he hoped, would equal Paris. Praha spread on both banks of the Vltava: on the left bank was (and is)

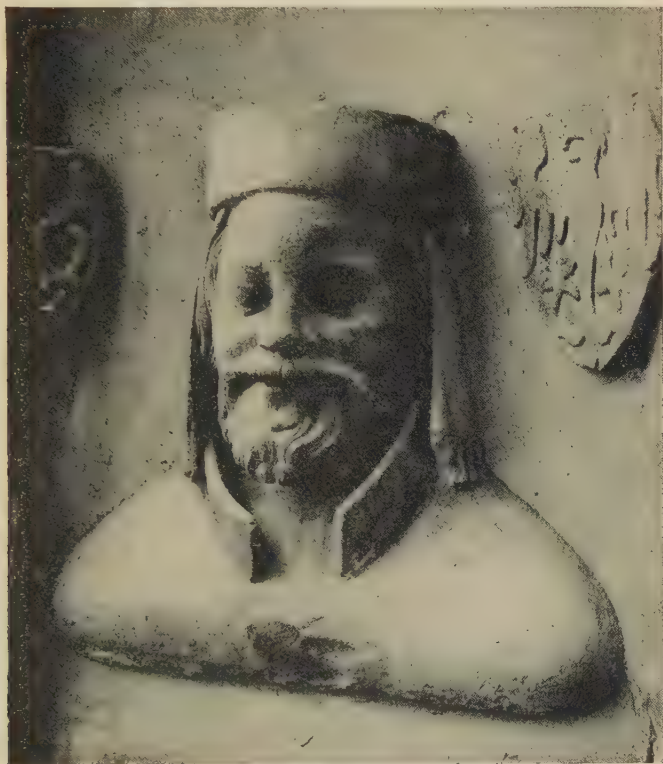


Fig. 15. Charles I.

the Smaller City or the Little Side (Malá Strana), on the right bank the Old Town (Staré Město); but since these sections were too small to accommodate the rapidly increasing population of the city, Charles decided to enlarge Praha by building another district. The "New Town" as it was called, which Charles built, adjoined the "Old Town", and was settled by artisans whose trades were disturbing to their neighbours in the close quarters of the "Old Town". Since the old bridge across the Vltava no longer met the needs

of the growing city, Charles built a new stone bridge to join the Little Side with the Old Town. So well was the Charles Bridge constructed, that it still stands.

The increase in prosperity was apparent in Charles's kingdom and expressed itself especially in art and architecture. The pious ruler favoured the building of churches in the new Gothic style.



Fig. 16. Karlštejn Castle.

Besides the Cathedral of St Vitus he built in this style the Church of Karlov, noted for its remarkable arched ceiling, and the monastery "Na Slovanech", which was settled by Benedictine monks from Croatia. Among other fine monuments dating back to his time are the Bridge Tower of Praha, the Church of St Barbara at Kutná Hora, and St James's Church, Brno.

The castle Karlštejn surpassed other castles in splendour, but was hidden away from prying eyes in the deep forests near Beroun,

above the river Mže. Among the valuables [that Charles placed there for safe-keeping were certain important documents and all the crown jewels (the sceptre, the sword, and the royal globe) except the beautiful new crown itself, which was deposited in the



Fig. 17. St Vojtěch, after a fresco in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, Karlštejn.

new chapel of St Václav in Praha Cathedral. For this reason, the Bohemian crown has been called the Crown of St Václav.

Painting and sculpture developed side by side with architecture. Especially noteworthy among the painters was Dětřich of Praha. Literature also made great progress. Most of the writing was still done in Latin, but gradually the Bohemian tongue was beginning to make its way into literature. Charles himself wrote

a Latin Life of St Václav, whom he greatly admired, and an autobiography. Though Charles spoke Latin and French, Italian and German, he held the Czech language in special esteem, considering it "majestic", "sweet-sounding", and "noble". He realized that on his mother's side he was a Bohemian, and deeply regretted



Fig. 18. From Abbess Kunhuta's *Passional*.

that he had forgotten the language of his own people during his long stay abroad. Therefore immediately after his return to Bohemia as King John's fellow-ruler, Charles applied himself industriously to a study of his mother tongue, and soon mastered it again.

Charles the Founder of the University of Praha (1348). The Czech lands suffered from a lack of native educated teachers,

priests, judges, and physicians; Charles decided to remedy this need by founding a University at Praha.*

By a University was meant a community of professors and students. This community was divided into four parts or Faculties: the Faculty of Theology, of Philosophy, of Law, and of Medicine. The professors of the University held



Fig. 19. From Abbess Kunhuta's Passional.

the degree of Master or of Doctor. The Faculty of Philosophy (or of the Seven Liberal Arts, as it was also called), was the lowest in rank. Latin, Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, Church Music, and Public Speaking (Oratory) were taught

* Several Czechs even then went abroad in order to study, especially to Paris. The eminent Czech theologian Vojtěch Raňkův (Raconis) studied there also and perhaps even at Oxford. From an inclination to the western culture he established a scholarship in his own country for his compatriots who would have wished to study at Paris or Oxford.

there. The graduates of the course at this Faculty made their way into the smaller towns as teachers, or entered one of the other Faculties, of which Theology was the most important.

Since at this time there was not a sufficient number of educated Czechs, Charles wished to induce as many foreigners as



Fig. 20. From the Book of Hours at the Crusaders' Monastery, Praha.

possible to come to his University. Therefore he offered them great privileges, guaranteeing them three voices in the election of officials and the making of important decisions, as against only one voice given to the natives of his kingdom. The University of Praha was the first University in Central Europe. Soon it acquired a great reputation, and professors and students flocked to it from far and wide.

Charles as Emperor. A few years after founding the University, Charles went to Rome, where, in 1355, the Pope crowned him Holy Roman Emperor. In the city of Pisa, on his return journey from Rome, he barely escaped alive from an attack that was made on him by the Italians. In 1356, he issued the Golden Bull, which provided that the lands of the crown of Bohemia were hereditary in

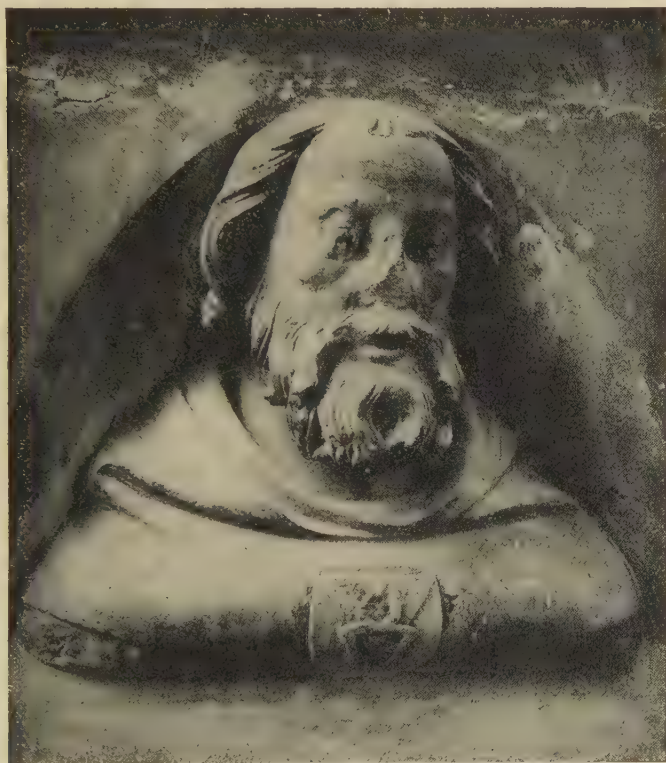


Fig. 21. Peter Parléř.

the reigning family, to be inherited by female heirs as well as by male heirs, and that the Czechs had the right to choose a new ruler only when the reigning family had died out completely.

Charles extended his kingdom greatly and without wars. He did so by means of treaties of alliance, marriage, and purchase. In these ways he gained the remainder of Silesia, Lower Lusatia, and Brandenburg. Although these lands, according to the Golden Bull, were to form an indivisible unit, Charles himself, before his

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death, divided them between his sons and his brother, John Henry. His firstborn son, Václav, became his successor in Bohemia, Silesia, and a part of Lusatia, and was elected Holy Roman Emperor even during his father's lifetime; his second son, John, inherited the remainder of Lusatia, while Brandenburg went to his youngest son, Sigismund, who, by his marriage with a Hungarian princess, also became heir to the throne of Hungary. To his nephews Prokop and Jošt, sons of his brother Henry, Charles left Moravia.

Charles's Disposition and Character. Charles was a very good-tempered as well as just monarch. His kindness gained him the love of his subjects, whom he aided in times of need. In 1360, during a period of famine and unemployment, he ordered a great wall to be built from the castle-hill, Hradčany, across the hill Petřín, and thus he provided work for many labourers and artisans, saving them from certain death by starvation. This part of the fortifications of Praha has ever since been known as the Hunger Wall.

Charles was greatly interested in events outside his kingdom; but the last days of his life were embittered by the news that two Popes had been elected simultaneously, and that a schism had therefore divided the Church into two hostile camps, with the result that faithful Christians did not know who was the true Pope.

The Father of his Country passed away in the sixty-third year of his life, on Saturday, November 29, 1378, three hours after sunset, to the great sorrow of his friends and of the whole Czech nation.

Václav IV (1378—1419).

Characteristics of King Václav. When Václav became king, he was only eighteen years old. The new monarch lacked his father's rare wisdom and discretion. While on the one hand he was inconstant and quarrelsome, and too fond of the chase and of wine, which often robbed him of the desired mental balance, on the other hand he was good-natured, had good intentions, and genuinely loved his people.

Václav's companions were young knights and noblemen who encouraged the King in his vices, and then took undue advantage of his weakness. The King, therefore, was unpopular with the older nobility and the clergy who, with the aid of his brother Sigismund, twice took Václav prisoner. In spite of it all, the country enjoyed peace and prosperity during the early years of Václav's reign.

Václav's Quarrel with the Archbishop. Gradually, however, threatening war-clouds began to gather on the Bohemian horizon. The King fell more and more under the influence of his favourites, who objected bitterly when young John of Jenštejn became Archbishop



Fig. 22. The Blessed Virgin with Child, Vyšehrad (XIVth century).

of Praha. The new Archbishop had extensive estates, which he carefully guarded from the covetous glances of the King's friends. A dispute broke out between the two sides, and the King took the part of his favourites, so that the relation between him and the Archbishop grew very strained.

The wealthy monastery at Kladruby (near Stříbro, in Western Bohemia) had lost its abbot. In 1393, Václav made up his mind to do away with it, and to found a new bishopric in Western Bohemia in its place. The Archbishop, in defiance of the King's wishes, named a new abbot to fill the vacancy. Václav was furious. To escape the King's wrath, the Archbishop was forced to flee from Praha, where his life was in danger. Less fortunate were four of his officials, among them Doctor John of Pomuk. The King had them arrested for having carried out their master's commands; they were then tortured, and John of Pomuk, more dead than alive, was bound and cast into the river.

The country naturally suffered from such strife, and Václav lacked the strength necessary for establishing order. Much less could he care for Germany. Therefore in 1400 the Electors deprived him of the German throne, and elected Robert of the Palatinate as Holy Roman Emperor.

CHAPTER V.

In the Glow of the Chalice.

The Heralds of a New Life.

Charles had constantly made gifts to churches and monasteries with a generous hand. The priests were growing rich, and lived gay and lavish lives, forgetting that Christ was their model. The decline in morals showed itself not only in the ranks of the clergy, but also among the laity, that is, among people of the world. All exhortations to a better life proved vain; therefore Charles called to Praha the German preacher, Konrád Waldhauser, who sternly reproved the backsliders for their every vice. A Canon of Praha Cathedral, John Milič of Kroměříž (in Moravia), acquired an even greater influence over believers. Milič gathered about him multitudes of Czech listeners, and it was in his power to move them. Vain women cast away their rich jewelry, and those who had strayed from the narrow path of virtue returned to it: usurers gave back the money they had made unjustly, and secret sinners as well as they who had sinned openly began to repent.

Milič knew how to gather disciples and followers, who hungrily listened to their master's "fiery words". One of his disciples was Matěj (Matthew) of Janov (a village near Tábor). He preached as zealously as had his master, heard confessions, and recommended frequent Holy Communion to all believers. He advised the reading of the Bible as the best support in times of trial.

Tomáš (Thomas) of Štítné, a nobleman from the South of Bohemia, also belonged to the pupils of Milič; being a layman, he wrote down his ideas rather than preached them. It is significant that he wrote in Czech, rather than in Latin, for which many people in those days reproached him. This gentle philosopher died about the year 1400.

Milič, Matthew of Janov, and Thomas of Štítné were filled with a single purpose: they wished to make the Czech people better, and therefore to better or to reform the Church. For this reason they are known as the Czech Reformers, and their efforts as the Czech Reformation. They were the heralds of



Fig. 23. King Václav IV.

a new and better way of life, and paved the way for the work of Master John Hus. Since they worked before him in point of time, they have also been called the Precursors of Hus. Tirelessly and without personal worldly reward they toiled for the moral re-birth of the Czech nation. Even students from far-away Slovakia, coming to Praha to study, were influenced by the worthy efforts of these men. The seed of their desire for a higher life fell on fertile soil.

John Hus.

Master John Hus was born in or about the year 1369 at Husinec in Southern Bohemia. He was called John of Husinec, after his birthplace, or merely John Hus for short. Having passed the lower schools, he entered the University. He sang in church for a living and, as a student, was so poor that he often went hungry. When he had completed his studies, acquiring the Master's degree, he became Professor in the University. From the first, his exemplary life and moral seriousness drew his students to him. He became a priest and, in 1402, the preacher of the Bethlehem Chapel.

The Bethlehem Chapel. For a long time there was no place in Praha where the Word of God could be freely preached in the Czech language and in accordance with the aims and ideals of John Milič of Kroměříž. Finally this need was met and the old wish of Czech believers fulfilled when a wealthy grocer of the Old Town, named Kříž, and one of the King's favourites, Knight John (Hanuš) of Milheim, built a chapel in the Old Town, where a secular priest was appointed preacher. It was his duty to preach two sermons (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) on each Sunday and holiday, in the Czech language. The working expenses of the Chapel were paid from gifts and offerings, which were sufficiently large to support several needy students at the University as well. The new Chapel was named Bethlehem Chapel, and the place near it where the students lived, was called Nazareth.

The populace looked forward to the sermons in Bethlehem Chapel, and when the voice of Hus resounded within its walls, his audience hardly dared so much as breathe. The zealous preacher demanded true Christian living of his hearers. He knew how to reach the hearts of the simple and the unsophisticated, not only by the spoken word, but also in his writings. To make the art of reading easier and therefore more accessible, he simplified the Czech grammar. He became the founder of a standard unified Czech language by recording in writing the dialect that was spoken at Praha, which became standard Bohemian. Hus was grieved when he saw how the nobility and some of the people, especially the townsfolk, used German expressions, which they mixed with Czech, for he was an ardent advocate of pure Czech speech. In his efforts to elevate the human soul, Hus took great interest in the religious folk song, which he made a part of the Divine Service.

Before long, Hus became the idol of the people. The Archbishop of Praha, Zbyněk Zajíc of Hasenborg, also grew fond of him, and appointed him preacher in the meetings (synods) of the clergy. Hus

thus found ample opportunity to reproach the clergy for their unexemplary, sinful lives. The reward he got for his pains was that the clergy and even the Archbishop himself became angry and hated him, for nobody likes to have his faults pointed out, especially when he knows that he deserves it.

Hus and Wyclif. Hus came under the influence of the ideas of John Wyclif, the English reformer, Professor in the University of Oxford, who had died in 1384. Certain Czechs had become familiar with his writings in England, whither they had escorted the Princess Anne, daughter of King Charles, when she became the bride of Richard II, King of England.*

Wyclif, relying directly on the authority of the Bible, repudiated everything not directly sanctioned by it. Since his teachings were contrary to the doctrines of the Papacy, they were condemned as heresy, and his followers were persecuted.

Hus became acquainted with the writings of Wyclif through his young contemporary and friend, Jerome (Jeronym) of Praha, who had spent some time at Anne's court. Wyclif's views were being accepted quickly in Bohemia, and therefore the Archbishop forbade the circulation of the English reformer's books.

The Decree of Kutná Hora. Hus, like many other thoughtful men of the time, thought that only a general Church Council could bring about the betterment of Christian life. Calls for such a council grew more and more insistent, until finally such a council was convened to meet in the city of Pisa, in northern Italy. The King of France proposed that first both Popes should be deposed. The King of Bohemia also favoured this view, but the Archbishop of Praha and the German Masters at the University declared themselves against it. Since these latter had three voices at the University, they made their views prevail there, against the wishes of the Bohemian Masters. Hus and Jerome of Praha convinced the King that it was necessary for the Czechs to have three votes at the University against one vote of the foreigners.

Hus at that time fell dangerously ill. Bidding farewell to his friends, he begged them to remain true to his teachings:

* "Good Queen Anne", as she was called in England, was born in 1366, and went to England in 1381. She was dearly beloved by her English subjects and often interposed with her husband in favour of the people. Richard loved her, and she exerted a beneficent influence on him. Unfortunately, she did not long enjoy her happiness, for she died of the plague in 1394.

"See, I am dying!" he said. "If I die, I beg that you stand for justice and for the liberation of our nation."

Soon afterwards the King, convinced by the just reasoning of Hus and of Jerome, met the Czech demands. On January 18, 1409, he issued the memorable Decree of Kutná Hora, by which the native-born students at the University were to enjoy three votes, while the foreigners were to have only one.

In vain the Germans strove to have the Decree nullified. Their efforts failing, in May, 1409, about one thousand Masters and students, in a body, left Praha, accompanied by a large group of servants, retainers, and other dependents. They were not glad to leave the beautiful city where they had known such privileges, but with their privileges gone, they did not wish to linger. The majority of them went to Leipzig, where later they founded a new University.

Meanwhile, in 1409, John Hus was chosen Rector of the University of Praha by the grateful Czech Nation.

Three Popes and Three Emperors. At King Václav's instigation, the now truly Czech University declared itself in favour of removing from office the two existing Popes. In their place the Council elected a new Pope, Alexander V. But this only served to increase confusion. The deposed Popes did not recognize anybody's authority to remove them from office, and instead of two Popes, there were now three: a bad situation had become worse. A similar state of affairs prevailed in the Holy Roman Empire. Václav, although he had been deposed as Emperor in 1400, had never given up his claims; after the death of Robert the Palatine, some of the Electors chose Jošt, Margrave of Moravia and Václav's cousin, others chose Sigismund, Václav's brother. Surely the dignity and power of Papacy and Empire could sink no lower than this!

The Excommunication of Hus. After the death of Pope Alexander V, John XXIII, an altogether unworthy successor of St Peter, became Pope. Since his neighbour the King of Naples refused to recognize him, he declared war on Naples. War costs money, and he did not have sufficient funds. To overcome his financial difficulties, he hit upon a profitable plan: he authorized the sale of indulgences. This meant that he promised absolution and remission of sins, and thus an escape from the punishment for sins, to all those who would pay him for this absolution, or, in other words, who bought an indulgence.

Indulgences were sold at Praha as well as elsewhere, and the method of sale was so much like common huckstering, that Hus and his friends were filled with revolt to the bottom of their souls. Hus took a firm stand against the whole procedure. Quarrels broke out between those who favoured their sale and the followers of Hus. In 1411, three youths, who had argued in church with the sellers of indulgences, were arrested and executed.

Hus, disobeying the command of the Archbishop, did not give up Wyclif's teachings. He was not frightened even when the Archbishop ordered the books of the English reformer to be publicly burnt, and excommunicated Hus. The enemies of Hus carried their complaints against the zealous preacher to the Pope himself. The Pope threatened to have all Divine Services at Praha stopped until Hus should leave the city. Soon afterwards the Holy Father gave orders for Hus to be arrested, judged according to ecclesiastical law, condemned, and turned over to "the secular arm" to be burnt at the stake; whereas the Bethlehem Chapel was to be razed to the ground. Hus, the fearless defender of Truth, not wishing to cause further confusion, left Praha in the autumn of 1412.

He went to the country, to the stronghold Koží near Tábor, where its owner, Sir John of Ústí, gave him refuge. He preached in the open to large crowds of people, who gathered from far and wide to hear his sermons. During his sojourn at Koží, Hus also devoted his time to writing his *Postilla** or Explanation of Holy Texts Read on Sundays. Hus dedicated his work to all "true Czechs". Its charming simplicity made it a great favourite.

After the death of his host at Koží, Hus went to the castle Krakovec near Rakovník, west of Praha. Thence he returned to Praha to prepare for his journey to the General Church Council which Pope John XXIII had convened at Constance in Switzerland.

For the Sake of Truth. Hus was invited to Constance by the German Emperor, Sigismund, who promised to furnish the reformer with a letter of safe-conduct. This document was to guarantee Hus freedom from persecution on the way to the Council, and judgment as a free man. The reformer, disregarding all voices that warned him not to trust Sigismund, decided to go to Constance. He erroneously hoped that he would be able to justify himself and convince

* *Postilla* comes from the Latin "post illa", meaning "after those things", i. e. "meditations after reading the Gospel".

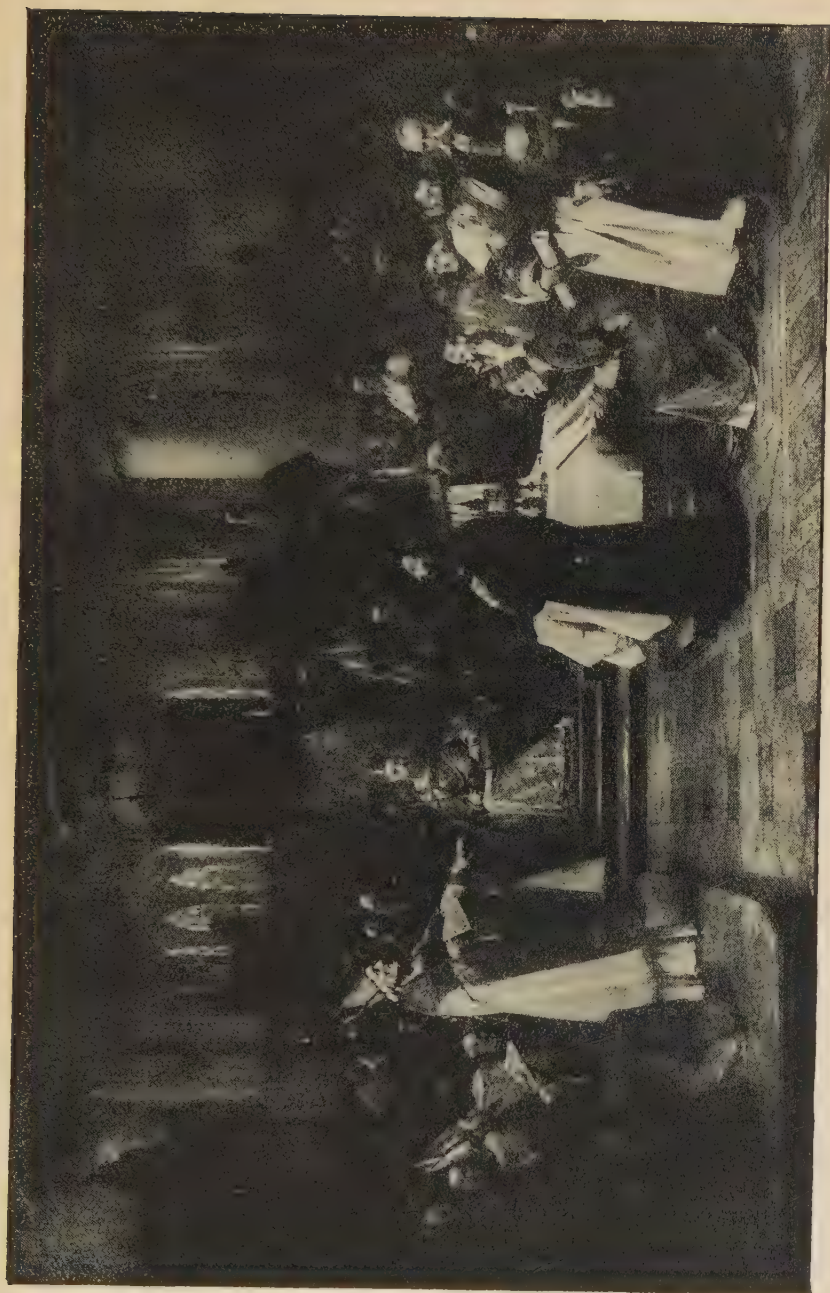


Fig. 24. Master John Hus at the Council of Constance (V. Brožík).

his judges that he was right. At the same time he did not fear to sacrifice everything, even life itself, for his opinions.

Accompanied by his friends, Hus went to Constance in the autumn of 1414. The safe-conduct did not save him for long. The Council, disregarding it utterly, had him cast in prison. The enemies of Hus wrote an accusation, which was unfair in many ways: it included declarations of false witnesses and, citing from the reformer's works, gave words and sentences which, when torn from their context, had different meanings and implications than Hus had intended. Many of his views were truly heretical, but Hus was convinced that they were orthodox, and tried to justify them by quoting the Gospel as his authority. The Council forbade him to defend himself and demanded that he should recant. This the reformer refused to do, for it would have been a denial of truth. The Council decided that the works of Hus were to be burnt as heretical. Hus persisted in his beliefs, and kept serenely calm in the bitterest moments of his life. He suspected what was in store for him, but his courage did not fail. On the contrary, he comforted others and exhorted his followers to be firm.

On June 10, 1415, Hus wrote his memorable letter to "the whole Czech nation", begging all Czechs to love one other, not to stand for the oppression of the virtuous, and not to deny anybody the truth. "Keep my memory alive", he once wrote to his countrymen, "for I wished to unite our glorious nation".

While the reformer was at Constance, his friend, Master Jakoubek of Střibro, established the custom in Bohemia of offering the faithful both bread and wine in the Holy Communion. Such Communion "in both kinds" had been practised by the early Christians, and Hus approved of its use by his followers.

Death of John Hus. On the sixth of July, 1415, Hus appeared before the Council for the last time. The Council — high dignitaries of the Church — and Sigismund with his court met in the Cathedral of Constance. After Mass had been sung, Hus entered the holy precincts. He knelt down and prayed. One of the bishops preached on the dangers of heresy. Then the whole course of the proceedings against Hus was described. The reformer wished to defend himself against false accusations, but was not allowed to do so. Kneeling with his hands clasped in prayer, he therefore commended his soul to God.

The Council then convicted Hus of having preached heresy and misled Christian believers, of having spoken lightly of the dignity of the Holy See and of the entire Church, and of having stubbornly persisted in his heretical notions. He was then publicly unfrocked; that is, the office of priesthood was taken away from him. Again he was asked to recant, and again he refused. Hearing abuses all around him, Hus was forced to don a paper crown, which bore in Latin the inscription, "This in the Arch-heretic". Then the dread sentence was pronounced: "The Church, having nothing more to do with you, consigns your body to the secular power, your soul to the Devil!"

Accompanied by about 1,000 armed men and a great crowd of curious onlookers, Hus was led beyond the town. There the sad procession stopped. The stake had already been prepared. Hus mounted the piled-up timber, and was bound to the stake with chains. His face was turned to the east and his eyes travelled in the direction of his country, where he was leaving all that had been dear to him on earth. At the last moment, he was made to turn to the west, since it was considered unfitting for a heretic to die facing in the direction of the rising sun. Hus was asked for the last time to retract, and thus save his life and soul. The reformer, feeling that he was innocent, declared that he was willing to die joyously in the cause of Truth, which he had taught and preached as he himself had found it. His executioners set fire to the piled-up wood. Commending his spirit to God's mercy and singing hymns, Hus soon breathed his last. The terrible death which he had been willing to undergo so courageously for his convictions gained him the respect and admiration of the civilized world, and set him down as one of the great figures in human history, a hero and a martyr. The words of this first Czech martyr who sacrificed his life for his conception of truth still live: "Love one another, and see that no discords, treasons, or anger rise up amongst you!"

Bohemia after the Death of Hus.

The Czech Reaction. With the trial and conviction of John Hus, the whole Czech nation had been judged and condemned, for Hus had been a great patriot as well as a great religious reformer. The news of his death touched everybody's heart in Bohemia. Lords and knights of the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Margraviate of

Moravia immediately sent the Council a letter of remonstrance bearing the seals of 452 noble houses. They expressed their extreme anger and indignation that the Council had convicted the preacher and teacher who had been so dear to them; they declared themselves willing to protect and defend men like Hus even at the cost of blood. The Council responded by placing Bohemia under an interdict and threatened to declare a Holy War. The Czechs were not frightened. On the contrary, their anger mounted higher and higher, especially when, in the summer of 1416, the news spread among them that that friend of Hus, the eloquent Jerome of Praha, had suffered the same fate as had the great Reformer before him, having been arrested whilst visiting Hus. Soon afterwards, the Masters of the University of Praha declared both Hus and Jerome Holy Martyrs. Before long the University declared Communion in both kinds to be an article of faith. It demanded further that the Word of God should be freely preached by Christian priests, that priests should not possess worldly goods, and that deadly sins should be punished. These demands were later known as the Four Articles of Praha.

The Hussite Parties. Soon the followers of Hus split into two factions: the more conservative side, of Praha (the "Pražané"), and the more radical side, of Tábor, (the "Táboři") or Taborites.* The former, to which belonged the well-to-do townspeople and most of the higher nobility, subscribed to the Four Articles of Praha, but otherwise did not depart from the tenets of the Catholic Church. The Taborites, on the other hand, were irreconcilable enemies of Rome. They repudiated everything that was not expressly mentioned in the Bible, such as Purgatory and monastic orders; of the sacraments they retained only Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Their Mass was simple: they used the Czech language, and celebrated it anywhere and without vestments. Luxury of all kinds, dancing, and music, were counted as deadly sins.

Besides these two chief parties, there arose other smaller groups, of which the Adamites were the most renowned. Against the Hussites

* At that time Peter Payne, commonly called Engliš, lectured as a professor of Theology in the University of Prague. He was among the Czech theologians who took part in the Church Congress at Basel. And perhaps it was Engliš who, in the years 1451 and 1452, assisted at Constantinople in the negotiations treating of the connection between the Hussite Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

stood the Romans; a few noble families and certain towns, such as Plzeň, remained on the Roman side. Thus the people of Bohemia were coming to be identified according to their religious beliefs, as partisans of communion in both kinds (bread and wine) and in one kind (bread alone), as Utraquists and as Catholics.

Troubled Times. Both Praha and the countryside were disquieted by the course that events were taking. People thought that the millenium was at hand, that the world was coming to an end, that Christ was coming down to earth to divide the sheep from the wolves at the Last Judgment and to found His Kingdom of Love and Mercy. They left their work, and followed their leaders to hill-tops, to which they gave biblical names, such as Oreb (near Třebechovice), or Zion (near Kutná Hora). There the preachers made "Christ's Truth" known to them. Sometimes encounters with the more zealous of the Catholics took place. Struggles over religion were especially frequent at Praha, where special processions were held. The monstrance containing the Host was carried on a pole at the head of the procession. During one such celebration a piece of rock was thrown from the new City Hall into the crowd. The peaceful procession at once became a furious fighting mob. Bursting into the City Hall, the people seized the councillors present there, and cast them out of the window into the crowd below where they were soon beaten to death. This episode is known in history as the *First Defenestration* (from the Latin *fenestra* — window — i. e. the casting out of the window). King Václav, learning of this violent action, was greatly agitated, and threatened to punish all who had taken part in the massacre. Though he calmed down again, the excitement was bad for him: he suffered from an attack of apoplexy soon afterwards, to which he succumbed on August 16, 1419.

John Žižka of Trocnov. This outrage at the City Hall had been witnessed by a man with a great future, a man of destiny. This was John Žižka, born in 1360. He signed himself Žižka of Trocnov, after the name of his manor Trocnov near the village of Borovany in Southern Bohemia. He had spent his youth fighting in quarrels with the German townsmen of Budějovice and Sir Henry of Rožmberk, on whom he and his companions took their vengeance by robbery and arson. Later he left his home in company with many of his compatriots, and became a mercenary in Poland. There he often proved his bravery. In a battle he lost one eye. When he returned

home, he entered King Václav's service as courtier to Queen Sophia. At Praha he came to know Hus, to whose teachings he became devoted with all his heart. Therefore he was filled with hatred towards all who had caused his beloved Master's death.

The Czechs and Sigismund. Upon Václav's death, the Czechs were willing to accept Sigismund as King, but only on the condition that he should allow them to administer the communion in both kinds. Emperor Sigismund, however, resolutely refused. The Hussites rose up against him. The centre of chief resistance became the newly-founded, strong-walled city of Tábor, on the river Lužice. Peasants, townsfolk and nobility moved there from surrounding towns and strongholds, bringing with them their wives and children. Thus the Taborite Brotherhood originated. Its members were all equal, calling each other brethren and sisters. The rich shared their wealth with the poor. John Žižka of Trocnov made himself head of the new Brotherhood.

When Sigismund saw that the Czechs did not want to recognize him as King, he determined to win the Czech crown by force of arms. At the same time he persuaded the Pope to declare a Holy War (or Crusade) on the Czechs. In the spring of 1420, Sigismund invaded Bohemia. The Crusaders committed unspeakable atrocities against the population. The German inhabitants of Kutná Hora burst upon their Czech neighbours, fought them, and threw their dead or still living bodies into the shafts of the silver mines. Sigismund with his army aimed at Praha, and that city prepared for a life and death struggle. At the time of its greatest need, the Taborites, led by Žižka, rushed to its aid. The one-eyed general saved the city when on the hill Vítkov he routed the so-called Crusaders. The memorable hill is called Žižkov to this day. Sigismund gathered reinforcements in Hungary and invaded Bohemia once more that year, but he failed to fare better than before. He was defeated in a bloody battle near Vyšehrad. The mob in blind fury invaded the glorious old castle of Vyšehrad, pillaged it, and then set fire to it.

In the spring of the following year (1421), Žižka undertook an expedition against the enemies of his religion. He captured many towns and tried to force the inhabitants to accept communion in both kinds. Many resisted, especially those of German blood. They were, therefore, driven out of their homes or otherwise got rid of, while Czechs took their places. Thus many of the towns became Czech. In Moravia the state of affairs was different. While there

were many Moravian followers of Hus, they did not unite as firmly as had the Czechs, and were therefore forced to submit to the oppression of the Catholics, while Moravian towns remained for the most part German.

The renowned leader met with an unfortunate accident in one of his battles. During the siege of the castle Rábi, he lost his other eye. From that time on, he was forced to rely on the reports of his subordinate officers (hejtmans), whom he initiated into the art of strategy. Although he was blind, he remained unconquered and unconquerable; he always knew how to escape without loss from the most difficult of situations, which his enemies could explain only as "due to the help of the Devil".

In the year 1421 a Council met at Čáslav where, besides the lords and knights, the royal towns were represented; they continued to send representatives from this time on. The Council of Čáslav strove hard to bring peace and order to the country, but its efforts proved fruitless.

Sigismund, wishing to conquer Bohemia at all costs, led a second Crusade against the Bohemians in 1421. His Crusaders, however, shamefully fled in confusion before Žižka at Žatec. Leaving Bohemia aside, Sigismund invaded Moravia in the same year, but the blind hero defeated the "red-haired beast", as the Hussites called Sigismund, first at Kutná Hora and a few days later at Německý Brod.

Žižka had constant work at home. He wished to establish order in Bohemia, with peace and unity in the Church. But the Catholic nobles and the more conservative of the Hussites acted treacherously towards the leader, secretly bargaining with Sigismund and the Pope. Therefore Civil War continued to rage to the great detriment of the country.

Žižka's Strategic Art. So great were Žižka's military talents, that he knew how to change a group of simple fighters into a disciplined force, eager to defend "the Law of God" and "the Czech and Slavonic tongue". He also knew how to choose advantageous places for battle. He allowed the enemy to attack him, defending himself in a camp made of war-wagons. His soldiers, faithful peasants, received the weapons to which they were accustomed since childhood days: flails and scythes and like implements. A single strong blow with the flail sufficed to crush the knight's armour and even his skull. The flail, with which the Hussite warrior knew how to strike as many as twenty times a minute, became the terror of the Crusaders.

The "Lord's Warriors", as the Hussites called themselves, strengthened themselves for the Holy War by prayers and hymns. Their best-known hymn was:

"Ye who are the Warriors of the Lord
And of his Law,
Beseech the Lord for help

And trust in Him,
That in the end, with Him on your side,
Ye shall ever win."

At the time of the armistice in 1423, Žižka made his way to Moravia. Thence he invaded Hungary to frighten the Magyars and to avenge himself upon them for the damage they had done in Moravia.

Soon Civil War in Bohemia raged furiously. Žižka was not allowed a moment's rest. He was disquieted especially by the double dealings of the Conservatives, and therefore he encountered them in battle in 1424. He defeated them near Kutná



Fig. 25. John Žižka and Prokop Holý (J. Čermák).

Hora and then advanced on Praha, whose citizens he wished to punish severely for their conservatism. The city was saved, it is said, by the skilful speech of the young priest, John Rokycana (native of Rokycany). Žižka made peace with the city. Then soldiers of all the Hussite factions, under the leadership of the blind hero, went to Moravia to seize it from the control of Sigismund and his son-in-law, Albert of Habsburg, Duke of Austria. Before the castle and town of Příbrav they pitched their camp, and there death suddenly cut short Žižka's brilliant career. He died on October 11, 1424. The most faithful of his friends and followers accompanied his bodily remains to Hradec Králové, where he was buried in the Church of the Holy Ghost. The men who had fought by his side and had served him so faithfully thenceforth called themselves "Orphans".

Prokop Holý. After the death of Žižka, Prokop Holý,* a priest, was placed at the head of the Hussite armies. He himself did not take part in battle, and was merely the *Administrator of the Armies*.

Before long, Bohemia was again threatened by powerful enemies. The Hussites, profiting by the instruction that Žižka had given them, proved victorious at Ústi in 1426. In the following year, they gained two great victories, one over Albert the Austrian in Lower Austria, the other over the Crusaders at Tachov (in Western Bohemia). After these victories, the Czechs began to undertake their celebrated *raids* into the neighbouring lands, spreading far and wide the fame of Bohemia, and inspiring universal fear. But in all these undertakings, the Hussites showed no lack of humanity. They spared all who wished to come to terms with them, and did not harm women, children, and the defenceless.

On one of their expeditions, the Hussites came to the Saxon town of Naumburg. The news spread that they wished to destroy it. The terrified citizens in their anxiety sent a procession of children, dressed in white, to beg for mercy. A glance at the innocent pleaders moved the heart of the Hussite chief so deeply that he spared the town. Since it was in the season of ripe cherries, he presented his small guests with bunches of the fruit, and from that time on, the "Day of the Hussite Cherries" has been annually celebrated in Naumburg.

From the first, the Czechs were anxious publicly to explain their religious convictions to the outside world. The Council of Constance was to have brought order into the Church, but it failed to do so. Therefore the cry for a new Council arose in Christendom. The Pope, unwillingly and after long hesitation, responded to the popular demand, and called a General Council to Basle (on the river Rhine). The wish that Sigismund should make peace with the Hussites was now heard on all sides: this, too, was to come under the consideration of the Council. Before the peace negotiations began, another and last effort was to be made to bring the Czechs to obedience — another Crusade. The armies of the Crusaders poured into Bohemia from three sides. The "Lord's Warriors" prepared to meet the enemy at Domažlice (in southwestern Bohemia).

On August 14, 1431, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, the Crusaders heard that the Hussites were only about a mile distant. No sooner had they

*"Holý" means bare, bald, clean-shaven; Prokop received this epithet because, contrary to the custom of Hussite priests, he went cleanshaven.

learnt of the Czechs' approach, than they heard the strains of the Hussite war-song:

"Fear not your enemies,
Mind not their numbers,
Keep your Lord in your hearts,
Fight for Him and with Him,
And flee not before the foe!"

The words of the song had a most powerful effect on the surprised Crusaders. At once their whole camp was in motion. And as the next stanza

— "All give heed to word of order
That ye have received,
Watch your leaders faithfully,
Comrades save each other,
Each man be careful and stay in his place,
And then shouting gaily
Cry: 'At them, quick, at them'." —

reached the ears of the Crusaders, they retreated in great confusion. The Czechs had gained another brilliant victory and found themselves at the height of their glory and power.

Only then did the Council in kindly words issue an invitation to them to take part in the activities at Basle. The Czech Council sent, among representatives from lay and clerical ranks, Prokop Holý and Master John Rokycana to Basle. After lengthy negotiations, the Council made a treaty (*compactata*) with the Czechs. By these agreements, communion in both kinds, if so desired, was to be allowed to adults in any Catholic church in Bohemia.

On the way to Lipany. All the Hussites did not subscribe to the *compactata*: especially Rokycana objected thereto. The Taborites and the Orphans fought the more conservative members who were in favour of accepting the *compactata* and making peace with the Church. The country suffered greatly from constant wars, and a universal cry for peace was to be heard. In 1433 the Catholic nobility met the more conservative Utraquists and formed a League for the Perpetuation of Peace, and at the same time ordered the Taborite and Orphan armies to disband. Already disloyalty was breaking out among the extremists, who were rapidly losing their discipline. The danger which the union between the Catholics and Conservative Utraquists meant for them, however, served to buoy up their failing spirits and bring back their old enthusiasm. The two sides met in battle on May 30, 1434, near Český Brod. The Taborites and Orphans took up their position on the heights near Lipany. The Conservatives used a ruse to defeat their enemies: they

simulated defeat and flight, tempting their foes to leave their strong position behind the protecting war-wagons. No sooner had the extremists done what had been expected of them and had exposed themselves to attack, than the Utraquists met them with reinforcements. A terribly bloody battle ensued. Prokop Holý, in his attempt to repulse the attack, fought at the head of the bravest men. Struck by an arrow, he fell and died. The flower of the "Lord's Warriors" fell. The Taborites and Orphans who were taken prisoners were locked in neighbouring barns and burned to death. What armies of hundreds of thousands of men, recruited from all over Europe, had been unable to do, Czech discord and mutual hatred had easily accomplished. At Lipany brother killed brother, Czech killed Czech. The battle of Lipany became the grave of Hussite strength and fame.

After the Battle of Lipany.

Sigismund, the Last of the Luxemburgs (1436—1437). Some time after the Battle of Lipany, the Taborites and the Orphans came to terms with the League of the Catholic and Utraquist nobility, and took joint action towards accepting Sigismund as King. Sigismund on his side wished to make his accession to the Czech throne easier, and thus sent the Bohemians a memorandum, in which he gave way to all their religious demands. Among other favours, he allowed them to elect their own Archbishop. The Hussites chose Rokycana. Sigismund however had not acted in good faith, for he had secretly promised the Council that he would not keep his promises to the Hussites. The Czech Council, believing in his sincerity, elected him King in 1436. At the end of the following year, Sigismund died. The Luxemburg dynasty, which had ruled in Czech lands for 127 years, passed away with him.

Habsburgs again on the Czech throne. After Sigismund's death, the Catholics and the milder Utraquists chose Albert of Habsburg King of Bohemia. The more radical of the Hussites wished Kazimír, a Polish prince, to be King, but Kazimír suddenly died without issue. Albert himself died after having ruled only two years. After his death, a son, Ladislav, called Pohrobek (the Posthumous), was born to his wife.

Ladislav Pohrobek. The Czechs did not wish to recognize the rights of the infant heir, and the Hungarians called the Polish King,

Vladislav, to the throne. When Vladislav refused the Czech crown, the Bohemians recognized Ladislav, after all, as King.

Besides religious struggles between the Catholics and the Hussites, the Czech land suffered from other quarrels, which in some sections of the country passed into bitter Civil War. An end to all these disorders was made by a young Czech nobleman, George (Jiří) of Poděbrady, who in 1448 gained control of Praha. In 1452 the Czech Council chose him Administrator of the land.

In Slovakia. In Hungary, two factions had arisen: one, favouring the Polish King Vladislav, was led by the seasoned fighter John Huňad, a Roumanian by birth; the other, defending the rights of Ladislav Pohrobek, by the Czech nobleman, John Jiskra of Brandýs.

The Czechs and the Moravians at the time of the Hussite Wars became the teachers of Europe in military tactics. The wagons of the Taborites rolled over the world with the noise of a peal of thunder and with the swiftness of the roaring wind. Czech Hussites served in foreign countries as mercenaries. Far away from home, in the Balkans, in Poland, in Russia, they served. They even made their way to the distant Baltic Sea. In those days arose the saying: "Every Czech is an army officer". Thus even John Jiskra of Brandýs entered military service abroad. Though a Hussite, he fought in Sigismund's army and took part in the struggles against the Turks. Later he hired himself out to Sigismund's successor and then he defended the heritage of "baby Ladislav" against the Poles.

Jiskra was in absolute control of the whole of Upper Hungary, that is, of the country that today constitutes Slovakia. On Jiskra's side fought his *Brotherhood*, noblemen and knights from Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Poland, and Slovakia. In 1444 the Hungarians lost their King, Vladislav, in the Battle of Varny (on the Black Sea), in the war against the Turks. Then they accepted the little boy, Ladislav Pohrobek, for their King, but entrusted the administration of the land during the King's minority to John Huňad, the famous conquerer of the Turks. Jiskra, his enemy, objected to this arrangement, and bitter struggles between the two distinguished warriors ensued. On September 7, 1451, a battle took place near Lučenec, where Jiskra and his followers won a brilliant victory, and forced the proud Huňad to retreat in shame. Nevertheless, Ladislav later rewarded Huňad and dismissed Jiskra. The glory of Ladislav's Brotherhood declined. Many of its members entered the ranks of its former enemies, while others returned home to die in poverty

Hussite soldiers in Slovakia did not bleed and die in vain, in spite of their seeming failure, for in Jiskra's time the Czech language took root in Slovakia and made its way to public documents and city registers, to the pulpit, to church hymns. Czech books, especially Bibles, were brought in by the soldiers and also by the Czech craftsmen who were settling there. Thus the Czechs and the Slovaks, formerly brothers, separated by the sword of the Magyar, were joined together again by the words of the Czech Bible which they both held in common.

The Death of Ladislav Pohrobek. George of Poděbrady continued to administer the Czech lands even after Ladislav's coronation. Bohemia at this time recovered from the wounds it had suffered in the days of Hussite storm and stress. So great was the prosperity of the country, that there arose a saying about it: "In the time of the beardless King, a sheep cost only a groat." Ladislav died in 1457, while still a youth.

The Czech Brethren.

Chelčický. When swords first clashed in the Hussite Wars a fearless voice made itself heard in Bohemia, crying: "Thou shalt not kill!" Christians are allowed neither to spill human blood, nor to fight, for according to the Scriptures the world should be founded on love and brotherhood. Thus spoke and taught Peter, a landed gentleman of Southern Bohemia, called Chelčický after his native village, Chelčice.

According to Chelčický, the Bible sufficed for the regulation of human conduct. He considered it unnecessary for Christians to be organized into states, with all the paraphernalia of monarchs and state officials and courts. He considered it wrong for Christians to charge interest on loans, to take part in business, or to render judgment in the courts of law. Chelčický consistently stood against the death penalty, for, he said, God, not man, is the master of life. He taught that culprits should be treated with brotherly love and kindness if they were to repent, and believed that the labourer stood nearest to Christ.

The Unity of the Brethren. The views of Chelčický, expressed in his works, became known all over the country. At Praha there arose a group of people, the Congregation of Master John Rokycana, who leaned towards Chelčický's teachings and objected to the

manners and morals they found in the city on all sides. This group, coming into existence in the time of George of Poděbrady, organized itself as a Unity, a special society. At the beginning it was quite small. Brother Řehoř (Gregory), formerly a monk in the Utraquist monastery "Na Slovanech", a nephew of John Rokycana, became its leader and adviser. In 1457 Řehoř and his flock found refuge at Kunvald in North-eastern Bohemia, on the estate of George of Poděbrady.

Gradually the Unity grew to great proportions. No differences were made among its members as to wealth or caste. They called each other Brethren and Sisters, as the earliest Christians had done. Therefore Chelčický's intellectual followers were called the Unity of the Brethren, or the Czech Brethren. The Unity gained adherents in other communities in Bohemia (for example, at Mladá Boleslav and Litomyšl) and in Moravia (for example, at Přerov). Since they differed from both the Catholics and the Hussites in rites and in doctrine, they were considered heretics or *beguines* (*pikarti*).

The Unity of the Brethren continued to develop and change, and suffered from several mighty blows; but in its core it kept its original high ideals and spirit unchanged, and counted among its members the best men and women in the land.

In 1727 the Unity was re-organized at Herrnhut in Saxony, under the influence of Count Zinzendorf, on altogether new lines, but ever keeping the historical tradition and the high ideals of the original brotherhood. During the course of the century the Brethren, or the Moravians, as they were now called, founded important settlements in England and in America. Their views deeply affected John and Charles Wesley, the founders of Methodism. The Moravian communities in America, especially at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and at Winston-Salem, North Carolina, stood out in great contrast to their New World surroundings, and played interesting parts in the American Revolution and in missionary activities among the Indians. Though the Brotherhood recruited its members chiefly in Germany, many Brethren were Czechs, and all kept alive the memory of their Czech predecessors.

The Hussite King.

George of Poděbrady as King. The death of King Ladislav Pohrobek caused an unexpected vacancy on the Czech throne. Several European monarchs immediately became interested. The candidature

of George of Poděbrady, however, carried most weight. When, upon Ladislav's death, people turned to George, they did so not only from gratitude for the prosperity he had brought to the country in the past, but also because they knew well that under his rule the kingdom would be best taken care of in the future. All sides favoured George's candidature: the Hussites, whose religion he adhered to openly, were partial to him, as were the Catholics, who saw in him a highly just man. On March 2, 1458, George was elected King of Bohemia.

At the same time the Hungarians also elected a new King — Matthias Korvín,* the gifted son of John Huňad. The new ruler married the daughter of George of Poděbrady.

A Period of Prosperity. Under George, the Czech lands soon began to prosper. Material welfare showed itself, among other things, in an improved currency. Education went hand in hand with better material conditions. Literary efforts were aided by the printing-press, which was introduced into Bohemia at that time. The first printing-press in Bohemia was set up at Plzeň, where so far as we know, the first Czech book was printed in 1468; entitled "The Chronicle of Troy", "Kronika trojanská".

George and his Neighbours. George's wise rule was early noticed in Germany, where great disorder prevailed at the time. Indeed, the plan of calling George to Germany to rule along with the irresolute Frederic of Habsburg arose in Germany, but nothing came of it. George began to occupy himself with the thought of a League of European Rulers with the King of France at its head. Formed for the purpose of driving the Turks out of Europe, such a league was to establish general peace. Unfortunately, there was little sympathy and understanding for such a plan among George's contemporaries.

George's Conflict with the Pope. Before his coronation, George had sworn obedience to the Pope, and had promised to root out all heresy in the realm. He had sworn at his coronation that he would uphold the laws of the land. Naturally, among these laws were the Compactata. Even as administrator, George had known how to remove religious disputes: but all these facts were not

* Korvín comes from the Latin word "corvus", meaning crow; the bird figured in the new king's coat-of-arms.

deemed sufficient by the Pope, Pius II, who demanded that George and his people should give up communion in both kinds. The King sent a special envoy to the Pope, to assure him of Czech respect and obedience, but at the same time asked the Holy Father to confirm the Compactata in the interests of peace. After protracted negotiations, the Pope declared these to be null and void, and warned George and his subjects that if they refused to obey his decision, "both King and Kingdom would be destroyed". It was within his power, he said, to do this. George, when he heard the threat, declared himself ready to sacrifice his throne, his life, and the lives of his wife and of his sons to save the Chalice for his people as it had been granted them by the Council of Basle.

George's Struggle with the Catholic Nobility, the Pope, and the King of Hungary. New difficulties arose for the Czech King with the death of Pope Pius II (1464). The new Pope, Paul II, came out against the Czechs, for he was certain that his efforts would succeed. The Czech nobles were beginning to grumble that George was strengthening the royal power; they saw with displeasure that he was finding support in the lower nobility and the towns, whose privileges he protected against the oppression of the high nobles. Therefore in 1465 the leading Catholic nobles formed a union, called *Jednota Zelenohorská*, (The Union of the Green Hill). Zdeněk of Šternberk, who had up to that time been George's friend became the leader of the new union, which went so far as to ask the Pope to free the Czech nation from the duty of obeying its King. The Holy Father met the demands of the union and excommunicated the King in violent terms, declaring him "a heretic, perjurer, and son of perdition". This only served to bind the nation as a whole even more closely to its King. The princes of the German Empire refused to take part in the Crusade that the Pope had declared against Bohemia. When he offered the Czech crown to various Christian kings and princes, nobody even applied for it, with the sole exception of Matthias Korvin.

In 1469 this Hungarian monarch invaded Bohemia with the troops he had gathered against the Turks. At Vilémov (near Čáslav) he was surrounded, and the Czechs were already rejoicing at the destruction of their "sworn murderer." Matthias saved himself only by an appeal for mercy and his word of honour, that he would give up all further struggle and would make peace between George and the Pope. The Czech king, however, was deceived by his per-

fidious neighbour, for soon afterwards, at Olomouc, Matthias had himself crowned King of Bohemia.

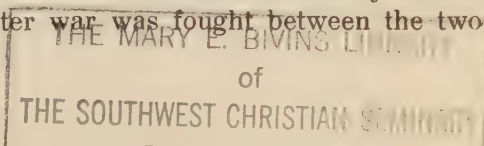
George's Victory. King George saw that the good faith of enemies could not be relied on, and that it would be impossible to come to terms with them. Filled with a just anger, he cast himself into the struggle with all his force. In order to be able to bring the struggle to a successful conclusion, he secured the aid of Kazimír, King of Poland. Polish support was secured at a heavy price: George promised the Czech throne to Kazimír's son, Vladislav, and thus sacrificed his ardent desire to keep the succession in his family.

George decided to destroy his enemies with a single blow. He punished the disloyalty of the Czech nobles, and turned with equal vehemence against his foes in Silesia and Lusatia. His son Henry defeated the Hungarians in Moravia. Matthias proceeded from Moravia to Bohemia, but here Queen Johana (Jane) herself took up a firm stand against him. King George came to her aid in the nick of time, and defeated the Hungarian army, driving them out of the land. Matthias in his humiliation was forced to sue for peace. The Pope, too, expressed his willingness to settle with him peacefully. Unfortunately, the star that had given light to Bohemia passed from the Czech horizon at the moment of the greatest victory.

The Death of King George. On March 22, 1471, the great and celebrated King of Bohemia, George of Poděbrady, died, only one month after the passing of the aged Master John Rokycana, whose recognition as Archbishop he had vainly striven to secure from the Pope.

The Jagellon Dynasty of Poland on the Czech Throne.

Vladislav I (1471—1516). When King George died, Matthias Korvin hoped that the Czechs would elect him King of Bohemia. Actually the Catholic nobles were working on his side, but the Hussites decided for Vladislav, the fifteen-year-old son of the Polish king Kazimír, and member of the family of the Jagellovci. The new ruler was a Catholic, but before his coronation he bound himself to defend the Compactata and uphold class liberties. Vladislav's vows unexpectedly infuriated the Pope, who placed Bohemia under an interdict. Matthias, too, showed himself to be the newly-elected King's enemy. A long and bitter war was fought between the two



neighbours, and Matthias gained control of Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia. Vladislav, giving up all hope that he would be able to regain these lands, granted them to Matthias by a treaty signed at Olomouc in 1478. The Czech kingdom was torn into two parts, and over each of these ruled a Czech King: at Olomouc it was settled that both Matthias and Vladislav should enjoy the title of "King of Bohemia". Moravia, Lusatia and Silesia were to stay in the hands of the victorious Matthias until his death; then the Czechs should have the right to buy these lands back for the sum of 400,000 Hungarian gulden.

The King's Personal Characteristics. Vladislav was a good-natured man, but a weak, vacillating ruler. The lazy, careless monarch was not well fitted to meet Bohemia's needs. He was very trustful, and did not know how to distinguish truth from falsehood. Nodding and saying "Dobře, dobře" (All right! All right!) he would often agree with both sides in a dispute: therefore he was known to his contemporaries as "King Dobře". Vladislav would not let his tasks worry him. He did not know the value of money, and even the lack of it did not put him in a bad humour. The King's weakness caused him to become a puppet in the hands of the undisciplined nobility. Thus it happened that while royal power sank, the nobles gained unusual force, and began to struggle with the townsfolk. The prosperity of both these groups was rising: the towns were being enriched by trade, the nobility by flourishing agriculture. The position of the serfs was becoming worse and worse. They had to perform heavy labour (robota), and could not move from estate to estate without their overlord's permission. In the Litoměřice district, a young man of the lower nobility, Dalibor of Kozojedy, took the part of the tyrannized masses. Soon, however, he met with a sad fate. He was captured, imprisoned, and condemned to death.

Religious Disputes. Religious conditions were still unsettled under King Vladislav. The Hussites were troubled by an increasing scarcity of priests, since none of the neighbouring bishops wanted to consecrate Hussite candidates for the priesthood. These were forced, therefore, to bribe Italian bishops, who performed the ceremony, the Pope's orders to the contrary notwithstanding. King Vladislav was a Catholic, and did not favour the Hussites. The group that was partial to the Chalice, and yet inclined towards unity with the Roman Church, gained the upper hand at Praha.

Its members were called „starokališníci” (starý = old, kalich = chalice). Soon they began to persecute the other sides. The King was prejudiced against the Brethren, and menaced them with fire and sword; but by the will of Heaven it happened that the more he tried to “snuff out the spark” of the Unity of the Brethren, the greater was the flame that burst from it. Finally, in 1485 at Kutná Hora, Vladislav

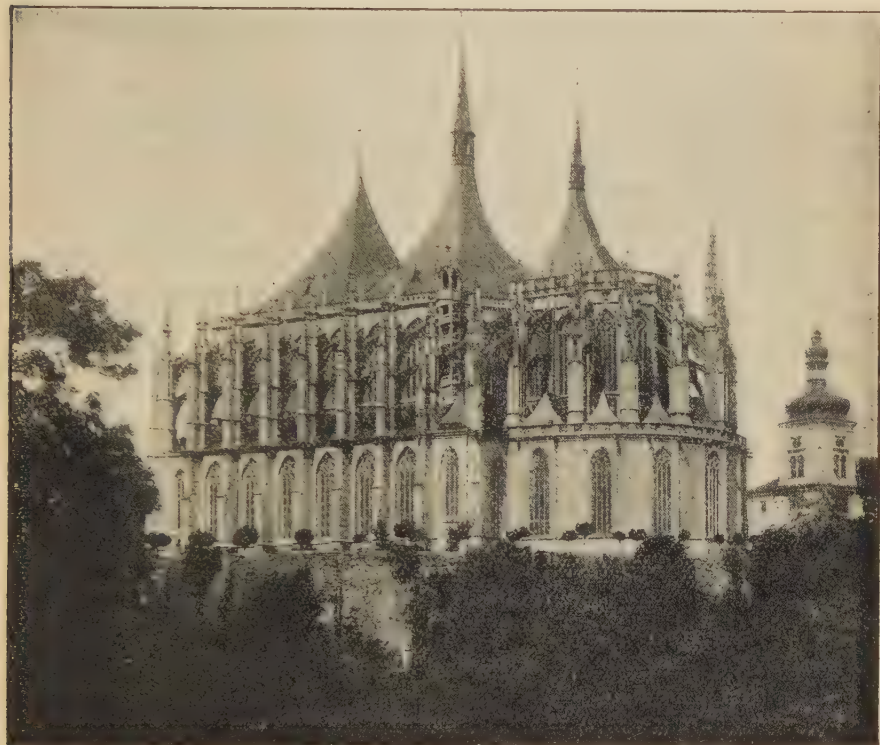


Fig. 26. Church of St Barbora, Kutná Hora.

brought the various sides to terms. They all promised that they would not abuse and oppress each other any longer. As a matter of fact, however, the disputes between them did not cease.

The Czech-Hungarian Empire. King Matthias died childless in 1490, and the Hungarian states offered the vacant throne to King Vladislav, who soon accepted, and moved from Praha to Budín. Now that Hungary and Bohemia were joined under one ruler, Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia were restored to the Czech crown.

At the same time, the Czech lands were, after a long separation, again united with Slovakia.

Class Disputes in Bohemia. King Vladislav appointed men to represent him in Bohemia and in Moravia during his absence. They belonged, for the most part, to the higher nobility. This class took selfish advantage of its opportunities to gain power. Lords and knights fought with the towns, refusing to allow these to send representatives to the land diets, and taking away some of their privileges.

The struggle between the nobility and the towns was not ended until 1517 by the so-called Treaty of Saint Václav (*smlouva svato-václavská*), by which the right of the towns to send representatives to the diets was recognized.

Vladislav's power in Bohemia was feeble, but in Hungary it was even weaker. There the nobility so oppressed their serfs that in 1514 the peasants revolted. The revolt placed the King himself in a dangerous position. The rumour spread that next the revolt would turn against the Czech nobility. The peasant rising, however, was violently suppressed, and its leader, George Dože, was cruelly tortured to death.

King Vladislav, in times of greatest difficulty, found support in the person of the German Emperor, Maximilian I, with whom he made a marriage agreement: his children, Anne and Louis, were to marry Maximilian's grandchildren, Ferdinand and Mary respectively. After the death of Louis his noble-hearted sister, Anne, who on her mother's side was of French blood, was to inherit the throne. A year after this agreement had been made, Vladislav died.

Louis I (1516—1526). Vladislav's successor was his eleven-year-old son, Louis. Under the new King, the selfish class disputes of his father's time continued. Moreover, Bohemia was the scene of religious quarrels, which had gained a new lease of life by the teachings of Martin Luther, the great German theologian and reformer. The youthful monarch was not able to take any steps in these disagreements, for he was busily occupied in organizing an expedition against the Turks, who at this time were threatening Hungary. Lacking forethought, Louis, with insufficient troops, met the huge invading Turkish army in Southern Hungary. He was defeated and routed. As he was attempting in his flight to ford a muddy stream near Mohač, Louis perished, on August 29, 1526. Louis was the last male descendant of the Jagellon dynasty.

The Fruits of the Jagellon Period.

Humanism. A love for Greek and Roman literary survivals had already been awakened in Czech lands in times past. Classical enthusiasts wished to spread true education, nobleness of heart, the best of human virtues or, as it was called, *humanity*, through these ancient works. Therefore the men who devoted themselves to a study of the classics were called *humanists*, their efforts *humanism*. Some of the Czech humanists wrote in Latin as, for example, Bohuslav Hasištejnský of Lobkovice; others, like the distinguished Czech lawyer, Viktor Kornel of Všehrad, used only Czech. Všehrad, conscious of his nationality, wished to learn Latin, but to write and to speak in Czech; by his translations from Latin into his native tongue, he wished to make the fount of classical learning accessible to the Czechs and the Slovaks. The outstanding Hungarian jurist and humanist, Stephen Verbärzy or Vrbovec, was assuredly also of Slav origin.

The Czech language at this period forced Latin out of offices and became the official tongue. Even the negotiations with German towns in neighbouring lands were carried on in Czech. Czech penetrated to Slovakia and even to the Magyar court. Already Matthias Korvin knew thoroughly how to write as well as speak Czech, as did his successor, King Vladislav, who found his chief lingual support in Slovakia. Czech became fashionable among the Polish nobility, and Czech writings were read in Poland with pleasure.

Art. Much was achieved in the field of art in the Jagellon period. Matouš (Matthew) Rejsek of Prostějov was one of the most noted architects of the time; the Prašná Brána (Gunpowder Gate) at Praha and the church of St Barbara at Kutná Hora are among his works. Another celebrated architect of the period was Benedikt Rejt of Pístov, also known as Beneš of Louny; he created the Hall of Vladislav in the Castle of Praha, and the Knights' Hall and Chapel at the castle Křivoklát. Not only Bohemia, but also Moravia boasts of precious relics in the fields of architecture and sculpture dating back to this age. Beautiful altars and pulpits, richly carved and painted, were set up all over the country.

Miniature painting and illumination reached an especially high degree of perfection; its examples have come down to us in precious collections of hymns. Sculpture and painting went hand in hand with the development of architecture. The arts and crafts were also gaining a better technique. Plentiful examples survive to prove to us what a high level jewelry-making had reached; artistic

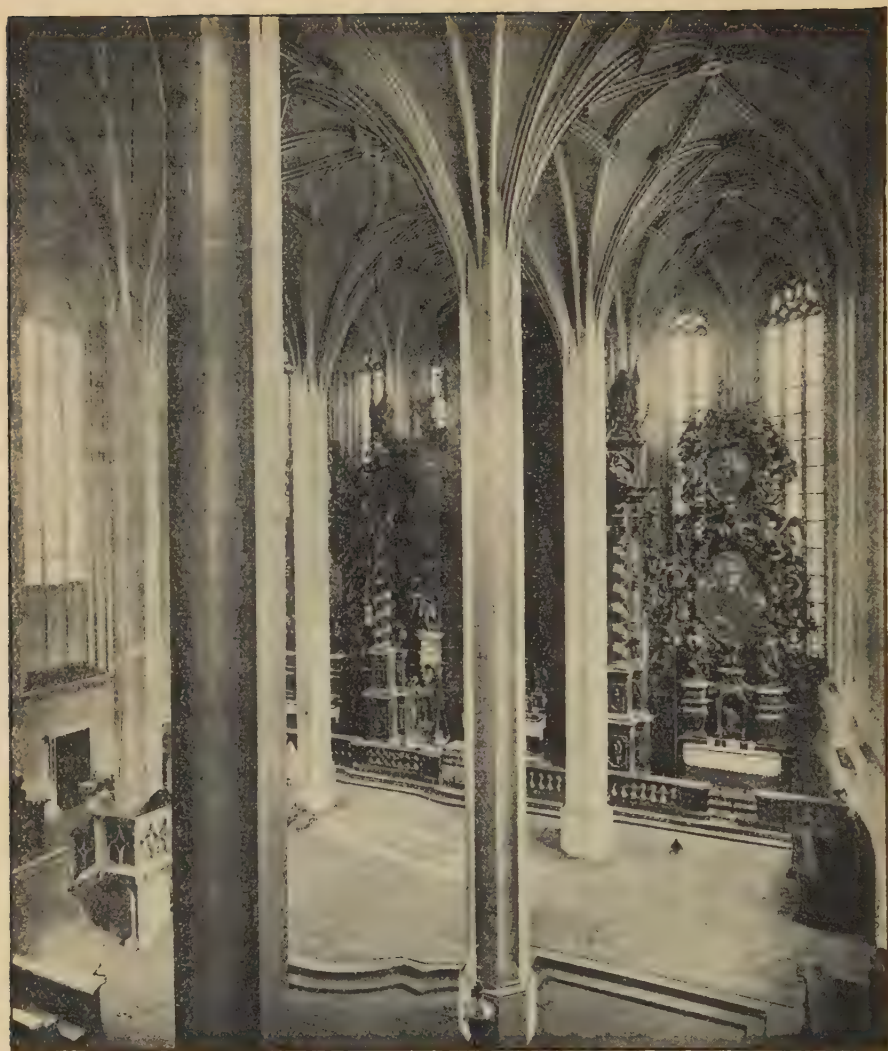


Fig. 27. Church of St Nicholas, Louny.

things also came out of the workshops of contemporary locksmiths, potters, and bookbinders. Among the metal-workers, especially the makers of bells, baptismal fonts, and candle-sticks were of outstanding merit. Hanuš, the master clock-maker, built the famous mechanical clock for the Old City Hall, where to this day windows open, the twelve Apostles bow and pass, the stone figures perform various motions, the stone cock crows, and the clock strikes every hour. Many precious embroideries also date back to this period.

Trade, Industry, Mining, and Agriculture. The Czech lands in the age of the Jagellons prospered. Trade and industry, especially the beer-industry, flourished; mining increased, agriculture improved. Fruit-growing and fish-culture assumed greater proportions, though they were practised only on the larger estates as, for example, that of Sir William of Pernštejn.

Sir William of Pernštejn (who died in 1521) was an ideal citizen of his time. He came of a Moravian family that had the head of the buffalo in its coat-of-arms. Both he and his father, Sir John of Pernštejn, stood by King George faithfully, though they were ardent Catholics. William grew very wealthy and gained extensive estates in Bohemia and in Moravia due to his efforts and outstanding ability. He made his estate at Pardubice (in Eastern Bohemia) his permanent home; today Pardubice proudly calls itself Pernštejn's town. As he was dying, Sir William expressed his feelings and his whole nature in a few words: "I believe in Rome, I hold with Bohemia (i. e. with the Utraquists), and I die with the Brethren."

CHAPTER VI.

Bohemian, Hungarian, and Alpine Lands under the Habsburgs for the Third Time.

Ferdinand I, King of Bohemia (1526—1564). King Louis died without heirs, and the Czech throne again began to tempt foreign neighbours. The Archduke of Austria, Ferdinand, husband of Louis' sister Anne, made the greatest claims to it. He declared that he desired the Czech crown "out of a pure love and a neighbourly partiality for the Czechs"; at the same time, he pointed to the agreement that had been made between his grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian, and King Vladimír of Jagellon. The Czechs were not willing to recognize this agreement, and desired to elect their King. Further, they were afraid that Ferdinand would be too severe as king. Ferdinand, however, knew how to gain supporters among the three Estates of Bohemia: he paved his way to the Czech throne with gold coin and golden promises. Thus it happened that on October 23, 1526, Ferdinand of Habsburg was elected King of Bohemia, and was also recognized in Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia. Making his way to Bohemia, in January 1527, at the gate of the kingdom, near Jihlava, he took an oath to preserve and uphold the laws and privileges of the land and swore that he and his court would move to Bohemia, and that he would heed the words of Czech advisers in his administration. Besides, he wrote a memorandum in which he certified that he had been elected King by the good, free will of the nation.

One month after his election to the Czech throne, Ferdinand was chosen King of Hungary as well. He mastered, however, only an insignificant portion of the Hungarian Kingdom, the greater part of which fell into the hands of John Zápolský, a native duke, who enjoyed Turkish support. Ferdinand therefore became involved in long and costly wars with the Turks. It was chiefly the Bohemian lands that bore the burden of these struggles.

Character and Appearance of Ferdinand I. The new king, a zealous Catholic, was a pale, thin, small man, with a large, hooked nose, and the prominent lower lip that was a family characteristic of the Habsburgs. The new king was firm, even cruel. He guarded his royal rights jealously. He knew several languages, but communicated with the Czechs through an interpreter.

Ferdinand's Reign. The King spent most of his time in travel. He rode from land to land, trying to get financial support against his enemies, Zápolský and the Turks; these annually invaded present-day Slovakia, where they pillaged towns and villages, drove away the cattle, and led women and children into captivity. The misery of the masses was heightened by the exceptionally hard "robota" or labour that they were forced to perform for their Magyar overlord. These cheerless conditions were rendered even worse by the constant disputes between the higher nobility and the lower, and between the nobility as a whole and the towns. Each of the classes held meetings, where it plotted against the others. Provincial diets met, but the stormy oratory that was indulged in there brought no positive results. Matters were made well-nigh unbearable by religious disputes: the faction that happened to be in power persecuted enemies that were inconvenient to it, exiled them, or took them prisoners, tortured them, and even burnt them at the stake. The land was overrun by marauding bands of robbers. Conditions were slow to improve.

The Land Records ("Desky Zemské"). In 1541 a great misfortune overtook Praha: the greater part of the Malá Strana and the castle itself were destroyed by fire. Very precious charters fell a prey to the flames. These documents had included the accusations and sentences of judgment of the highest court of the land, market agreements for various estates, inheritance documents, marriage agreements, decisions of the diet, and royal mandates. Originally these documents had been written in Latin, from Hussite times only in Czech, later also in German, and finally only in German.

The origin of the Land Records is very ancient. The oldest entries that have been preserved date back to the thirteenth century; these documents are among the greatest relics of the past. No other state in Europe can boast of like treasures. The Land Records, so far as these remain, bear witness to the Czech respect for law and that sense of order which makes a people gain the reputation of being desirable friends.

Luther. Ferdinand's elder brother, Charles V, was Holy Roman Emperor. Charles had also inherited the Netherlands, Spain, and the newly-discovered America. In Germany, the teachings of Martin Luther were gaining more and more adherents, among them many powerful laymen. These began to confiscate and secularize numerous clerical estates which had belonged to bishops and religious houses. When the Catholic majority attempted to stop the spread of the new doctrines, Luther's followers *protested*. From that time on, they were known as *Protestants*. Soon afterwards they formed a defensive league. War broke out between them and the Emperor. Charles, finding himself in a difficult situation, called on his brother for aid. Ferdinand, with the consent of the diet, issued a call to arms. His army was to rally in Western Bohemia, near Kadaň. Many of the Czech nobles, however, had no intention to fight their German co-religionists, and did not obey the King's call. Only the nobles of Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia went forth with Ferdinand into battle.

Those who had disregarded Ferdinand's orders began to make plots against him. The citizens of the three districts of Praha made a union with most of the royal towns to defend the liberties of the land. Straightway Utraquist and Protestant lords and knights began to gather at Praha; they not only approved of the league of the towns, but even went so far as to become its members. The leading spirits of the opposition to Ferdinand were nobles, who were members of the Unity of the Brethren. All who took part in these agreements were firmly convinced of the strength and invincibility of their league.

The Bloody Diet of Praha. The Protestants of Germany, in the hour of need, turned to their Czech co-religionists with a request for aid. These did not dare, however, to take such a decisive step, and thus were in part responsible for the defeat of the German Protestants. When Ferdinand returned to Bohemia as victor, the very men who had refused to obey his call to arms, rushed to greet him, and tried to prove that they had been persuaded by others to disobey him. Ferdinand promised to grant pardon to most of them; not, however, to all: the chief leaders of the revolt and the towns were to be punished. The towns had to send him hostages and give up all arms; the King took away their privileges, which were returned to them only partially. They lost their estates and had to pay new taxes. A new set of officials, (the royal "rychtáři"), were to have special jurisdiction over them. The chief individual

culprits, for the most part members of the Unity of the Brethren, were punished by a confiscation of their estates.

The King was most severe towards four men. Though they had begged for mercy, he wished to make an example of them to the whole country: two members of the noble class and two townsmen were cruelly tortured and then condemned to death. Their execution took place on August 22, 1547, on the square of Hradčany, while the beating of drums and the sounding of whistles drowned their dying words.

The diet, where these punishments were meted out, has gone down in history as the "bloody diet". The Czechs at the diet recognized that Anne, the wife of King Ferdinand, had a hereditary claim to Czech throne. The first four of Ferdinand's successors were no longer elected, but were merely "accepted" as Kings of Bohemia.

The Beginnings of the persecution of Non-Catholics in Czech Lands: (The Counter-Reformation). The religious situation in Bohemia under Ferdinand was a very wretched one. The Unity of the Moravian Brethren was the worst off. The Unity was disliked by the remnants of the old (conservative) Hussite group (the Old Utraquists), while the King saw in the Brethren his arch-enemies. Therefore in 1547 he began to persecute them cruelly, arresting, imprisoning or exiling them. What anguish and anxiety he caused! Family ties and ancient friendships were broken, family estates and homes were deserted, painfully amassed fortunes were lost. In Moravia, conditions were somewhat better; there the Unity had a few powerful and fearless protectors.

In the neighbouring Germany, the principle "*cuius regio, eius religio*" (that the country should adopt the religion of its rulers) was gradually being put into practice. This meant that the ruler of each principality decided what form of religion his subjects were to believe in. Whoever did not wish to conform to his sovereign's choice had the right to move out of the land. This principle did not hold good in the Czech lands. Ferdinand's coronation oath bound him to protect neither the Unity nor the Protestants. He was to uphold only the Compactata and the recognized religions: the Catholic and the Utraquist. The Utraquist Church was falling to pieces and the Catholics formed only an insignificant minority of the population. The Catholic party was ably led and, in spite of its small numbers, was self-possessed and certain of its ground,

for it could depend on the King's support. Ferdinand, on his side, had hopes that he would be able to unite the whole nation under one religion.

With this ideal in mind, Ferdinand, who in 1556 succeeded his brother Charles as Holy Roman Emperor, invited the *Jesuits* to Bohemia. The Jesuits were a religious order, founded shortly before by a Spanish knight, Ignatius Loyola. The new order propagated the Catholic cause by sermons and religious services, in theatrical performances, and especially in schools. The Jesuits also made their influence felt as confessors. In Bohemia, they were regarded with distrust at first, but thanks to their tireless efforts, they knew how to gain the support and love of their pupils, who were, for the most part, the sons of rich Catholic nobles, knights, and townsmen. In time even the sons of non-Catholics began to go to Jesuit schools. Unfortunately, the Jesuits sowed in their pupils' hearts hate and intolerance for other religions rather than brotherly love. The pupils of the Jesuits became ardent warriors for the Catholic Church, who were to conquer heretics, and convert them to the Roman faith.

At Prague, George Ware taught at the Jesuits' College, and somewhat later Edmund Campion. Both of these Englishmen spread influence. Campion, after his return to England, was in 1581 condemned to death. He was the first of the Jesuit Order to suffer martyrdom.

Ferdinand tried yet another measure for bringing the non-Catholics into agreement with Rome. After lengthy negotiations, he succeeded in 1561 in having an Archbishop installed at Praha, for the first time since the beginning of the Hussite period. The power of the Archbishop extended only to Catholics, but the King hoped that in time the Old Utraquists would also obey the Archbishop, for, due to Ferdinand's influence, their right to communion in both kinds had been re-affirmed by the new general Church Council at Trent, in the Tyrol mountains. On the very day in 1564 that this Utraquist privilege was being joyously proclaimed in Bohemia, Ferdinand died. Neither Ferdinand nor his successor became truly national monarchs of Bohemia: they did not feel with it, and considered it mainly as a rich possession and a plentiful source of revenue.

Ferdinand's Heirs.

Maximilian II (1564—1576). The Czech Creed. Religious oppression was relaxed in Bohemian lands during the rule of Ferdinand's son and successor, Maximilian II. The new ruler longed in vain for a reconciliation between the Protestants and the Catholics. The Protestants drew near to the Unity of the Brethren. In 1575 they handed a common creed or Czech Confession of Faith to the Emperor, with the request that he should recognize it in writing. The Emperor refused to do so, and only gave his word of honour that he would not interfere with the religious practices of the Estates. At the same time he allowed them to elect "defensores" (defenders) of their faith.

Rudolph II (1576—1611). Religious Conditions in Czech Lands. After Maximilian's short reign, his son, Rudolph II, became King and Emperor. Rudolph lacked mental balance. While scientists and artists from all over Europe surrounded him at his court, the reins of administration fell into the hands of dishonest and incapable officials. The number of Catholic zealots multiplied, their power over the empire increased. Influenced by the Papal legate, the Archbishop of Praha, and his own relatives, Rudolph appointed staunch Catholics, former pupils of the Jesuits, to positions of importance. Among them were the descendants of faithful supporters of the Chalice, such as Zdeněk of Lobkovice, Jaroslav Bořita of Martinice, William Slavata of Chlum and Košumberk, Charles of Lichtenštejn, and others. Many were influenced by Catholic wives, beautiful Italian and Spanish women. The Catholics had a grudge especially against the Unity of the Brethren, and undertook a bold attack upon it. The meeting-houses (churches) of the Brethren were to be closed down, and the serfs of noble Brethren were to follow either the Roman or the conservative old Utraquist faith. Rudolph declared that he wished to protect only these two recognized religions, and that he would persecute all others.

The Counter-Reformation in Slovakia; Stephen Bočkaj. Religious oppression made itself felt in Slovakia as well as in Bohemia. The churches and schools of non-Catholics were closed, disobedient Protestants were fined or imprisoned, and their preachers exiled from the land. In 1604 and in 1606 the Slovaks revolted against such oppression. They allied themselves with Stephen Bočkaj, a Transylvanian nobleman, who drove the imperial army beyond

Bratislava. Crossing the boundary into Moravia, Bočkaj laid waste the "Moravian Garden" (around Uherské Hradiště). The Hungarian rebels asked the nobility of Bohemia and Moravia, led by the educated Brother, Sir Charles of Žerotín, to join their ranks and gain by conquest what they had striven for so long: freedom for the Estates, and religious freedom. The Czechs and the Moravians did not know how to use this precious opportunity in time. Bočkaj's rebellion ended in 1606 by a peace which recognized even the religious freedom of the serfs.

Struggle between Rudolph and Matthias. New difficulties overtook the country before long. They were brought about by Rudolph's brother Matthias, who himself longed for power. Since Rudolph continued to live, Matthias decided to remove him from power rather than wait for his death. Matthias made an agreement with the Moravian leaders, Charles of Lichtenstein and Charles of Žerotín, and invaded Bohemia in the expectation that the Estates of Bohemia would join his side. These, however, remained faithful to Rudolph, hoping that he would meet their demands. Rudolph actually met some of them, but postponed the confirmation of the religious rights of the Estates. Matthias was forced to make peace with his brother in 1608, at Libeň (near Praha); he was recognized as heir to the throne, while Hungary, Austria, and Moravia were granted to him outright.

The Letter of Majesty. Rudolph, when the danger was past, hesitated to oblige the Czech Estates. Therefore the Bohemians began to threaten him. They were led by Václav Budovec of Budov, the pride of the Czech Brethren. The King, fearing the loss of his throne, disregarded the protests of the Catholics, and met the Czech demands. On July 9, 1609, he issued his celebrated Letter of Majesty (Majestát). This was a law which provided that a free practice of religion according to the Czech creed should be granted to the Estates and their dependents; it gave the Czech Estates the right to organize the administration of their church, (the Konsistoř), and of electing defenders. These officials had the right to call a convention of the Estates for the defence of the faith at any time. The Silesians gained parallel privileges. The Letter of Majesty also placed the University of Praha under the control of the Estates.

The Protestant and Catholic Estates agreed among themselves that the former might build churches and establish cemeteries on

land belonging to the King. A spirit of generosity and co-operation could be felt in all these agreements, a spirit that was to bring peace to all men of good will in Bohemia.

Rudolph's End. Peace in Bohemia lasted for only a short time. The Emperor was busy plotting revenge against Matthias, for his unbrotherly behaviour. He determined that Matthias should not succeed him, but that his kinsman, Leopold, at that time Bishop of Pasov, should become the next King of Bohemia. Leopold invaded Bohemia with an army. The Czech Estates called Matthias to their aid, and drove the uninvited pretender post-haste out of the country. Matthias, however, deceived the Czechs. Contrary to all expectations, he had himself crowned King of Bohemia, and forced Rudolph to give up his throne. A year later the deposed monarch, who had lost his reason, died.

The Age of Gold.

The arts and sciences were progressing favourably during this period. Praha was the centre of activity. Ferdinand I, wishing to enjoy the beautiful castle of Praha, had a deer-park established in its immediate vicinity, and near by he built a charming palace, the Belvedere, for his wife, Queen Anne. Under Rudolph, the Belvedere was transformed into an observatory; where the famous court astronomer, Tycho de Brahé, a Dane by birth, worked and thought. The celebrated German astronomer, John Kepler, also found favour at Rudolph's court. Anne's palace boasted of many valuable works of the world's most excellent sculptors. Dealers and collectors of antiques were commissioned by Rudolph to buy up for the royal collections various precious jewels, medals, carvings, clocks, crystal vases, and other works of art.

A special building in the royal garden was dedicated to favourite games and sports. At a short distance from it was the royal zoo, where various animals, such as lions and tigers, were kept. All round, as far as the eye could reach were gardens with their fine lawns and shrubs and trees. Splendid fig and, orange trees, so foreign to the Czech soil and climate, were the most remarkable. The royal garden contained a marble fountain, whose waters in the warmer months cooled the beds of roses and precious tulips that were planted around it.

In Rudolph's day the royal gardens in Bubeneč, dating back to the times of John of Luxemburg, awakened to a new life after

years of neglect. Near Praha, where the White Hill (Bílá Hora) ends, Ferdinand had built a hunting-lodge, really a small palace. Since it had the shape of a six-cornered star, it was named "Hvězda" (the Star).

The zeal with which these early Habsburg emperors built castles and palaces penetrated to the ranks of the nobility and the wealthier citizens, who followed suit, as is shown by such buildings as the Schwarzenberg palace on Hradčany, the castles at Jindřichův Hradec, Litomyšl, and Telč, the town-halls at Prachatice and Plzeň. Beautiful examples of the sculpture and painting of the period have been preserved; the hymnals as, for example, that of Hradec Králové, contain very precious and characteristic examples of painting at that time.

The glass and other industries expanded, and trade grew, due to the organization of the Royal Post, which established regular connections between Praha and Vienna and Praha and Linec twice a week.

The King, as well as many noblemen and rich citizens dabbled in *alchemy*. The alchemists searched for the "philosopher's stone" and the "elixir of life": to the former they attributed the power of prolonging human life, to the latter the property of turning metals, such as mercury, into gold. More than one fanatical alchemist was impoverished by his experiments. Gold Street, the scene of the alchemists' work and life, near the castle of Praha, is even today an interesting survival of their efforts. Although they did not succeed in their attempts because alchemy was a false science, they yet laid the foundations of that true science, *chemistry*.

The invention of printing brought about an increasing development of literature. Of the Catholic writers, the traveller, Václav Vratislav of Mitrovice, was the most famous; but the greatest authors came from the ranks of the Brethren. Brother John Blahoslav (who died in 1571) translated the New Testament into Czech, and gave an impetus to the translation of the whole Bible. Since this Czech Bible was printed at Kralice in Moravia, it is called the *Kralická Bible*. Václav Budovec of Budov and Christopher Harant of Polžice and Bezručice, a man with remarkable gifts of both body and mind, gained fame not merely at home, but also far away in the distant world. Harant knew not only Czech, but German, Italian, Latin, and Greek as well. He was an educated musician, an excellent horseman, and proficient in swimming, running, and fencing. He wrote and illustrated a record of his travels from Bohemia to Venice, Palestine, and Egypt. Daniel Adam of Veleslavín, a celebrated publisher and printer of Czech books, stood close to the principles professed by these men and the Unity, which, however, he admired only in secret.

Education, especially as found in the schools of the Brethren, was developing hopefully. The Brethren paid attention to the schooling of their daughters as well as of their sons. The number

of schools in Slovakia was multiplying. The Rector of the University of Praha, Martin Bacháček Nouměřický, deserved great credit

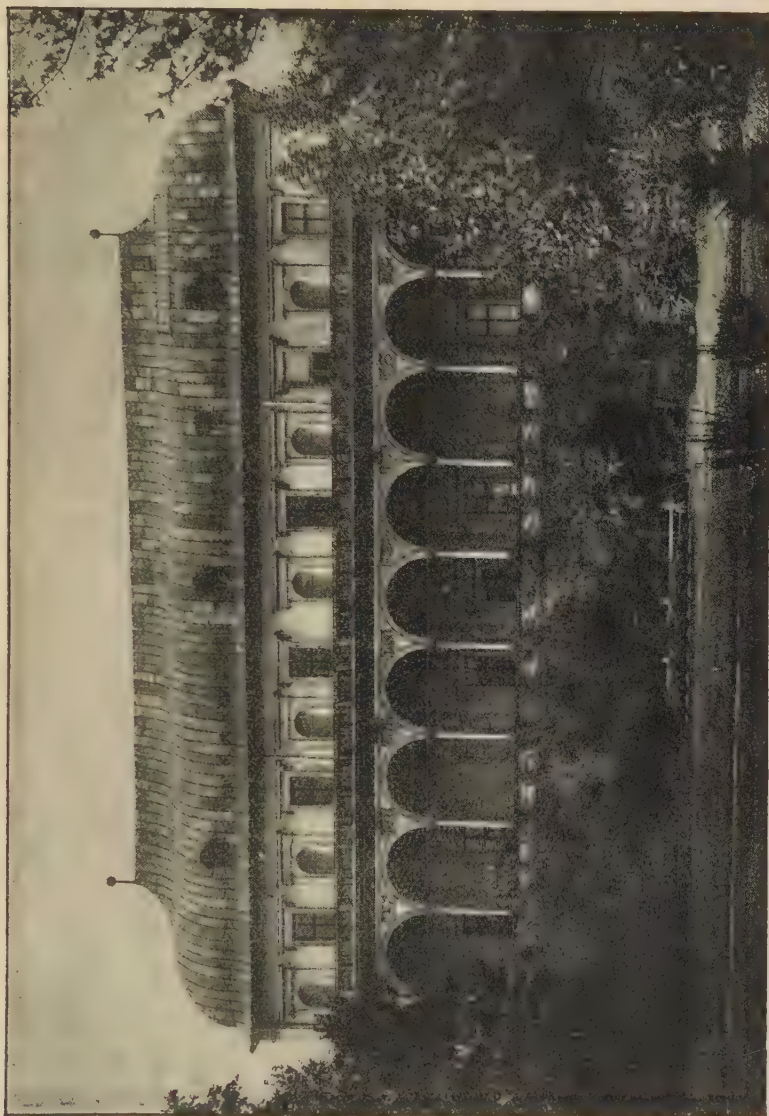


Fig. 28. Queen Anne's summer residence (Belvedere).

in the development of town schools. Truly it was possible for Bohemians to say: "In education we lead and point the way to other nations."

Before the Battle of the White Hill.

Matthias I (1611—1619). The Emperor Matthias chose Vienna, not Praha, as his capital. Thenceforth Vienna began to outshine Praha. He appointed governors to represent him in Bohemia: they were to co-operate with him through the medium of the Czech Court Office (Česká Kancelář Dvorská), which he also transferred to Vienna.

Germanism in Bohemia. From the middle of the sixteenth century, German nobles, townsfolk, and craftsmen began to pour into Bohemia, settling especially on the slopes of the Ore Mountains (Krušné Hory); they came because they were being persecuted at home for their religious beliefs. Peasants moved into Bohemia, tempted by various advantages and the cheapness of Czech landed property (grunts). They pushed into the interior of the country from the boundary land. The German language spread at Praha, and towns such as Teplice, Ústí on the Elbe (Ústí nad Labem) and Most, formerly purely Bohemian, became German. Large German minorities were to be found in the districts of Žatec, Litoměřice, and others. Therefore in 1615 the diet made a Czech law, which provided that in future no foreigner, ignorant of the Bohemian language, should be accepted as a citizen, that is, as a member of one of the three free estates.

Disputes over Churches and Cemeteries. Matthias, who had no children of his own, strove to have his nephew Ferdinand, Duke of Styria, recognized as his successor in Bohemia, Hungary, and the Holy Roman Empire. The aggressive Catholic minority put great hope in Ferdinand, who only a short time before had unscrupulously done away with the Protestant minority in his duchy. Owing to the influence of this group, Ferdinand was actually accepted as King of Bohemia in 1617. Even most of the Protestant Estates voted for him. This step was a fatal mistake.

Soon afterwards, there arose bitter feuds as to whether Protestant Estates (i. e. Protestants and Brethren) might build churches and establish cemeteries on the property of the Catholic Church. They considered church property as the property of the King, as was the case in Silesia and Moravia. The Catholic party, however, looked upon church property differently, and at the order of the Abbot of Břevnov (a Benedictine monastery), the Protestant church in Broumov was closed. Simultaneously, the Archbishop of Praha



Fig. 29. The Second Defenestration (V. Brožík).

ordered that the Protestant church at Hroby (in the Ore Mountains) should be demolished. In both cases, the resisting peasants were punished by imprisonment. Both Hroby and Broumov were situated in districts inhabited by German-speaking people. These events filled the Protestant nobles with panic, for they feared that the Catholic minority would rob them of the precious Letter of Majesty that Rudolph had granted them, even though both Matthias and Ferdinand had confirmed it.

The Second Defenestration. The Czech Protestants were alarmed by the declaration of the governors that the Catholic authorities had in both cases acted with the consent of the Emperor. Therefore the defenders convened a council to meet at Praha in March, 1618. There it was decided that they should meet again on May 21. The Emperor Matthias forbade them to meet. The Protestants believed that the governors had influenced him to take this stand. After a stormy meeting in the tower of the Smiřický palace on Little Side, the Protestant Estates decided to get rid of the despised governors, and replace them by a government of thirty directors under the leadership of the experienced William of Roupov. On May 23, 1618, bursting into the castle of Praha, the governors, Slavata and Martinic, and a secretary, Philip Fabricius, were thrown from the window. They did not suffer great injuries for they fell on a rubbish heap.

The Revolt of the Czech Estates. After this deed, the Czech Estates wrote to the Emperor saying that they remained his faithful and obedient subjects, and that they had acted only against their disloyal fellow-countrymen. Immediately afterwards, they drove the Jesuits out of the land, chose a government of thirty Directors (ten from each of the three Estates), and began gathering an army, at the head of which they placed Matthias Thurn, a Protestant German nobleman living in Bohemia. Then they began to negotiate for a union with the Estates of the other countries of the Kingdom of Bohemia (i. e. Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia), and even with the Estates of Austria and Hungary. The Moravians, under the leadership of Sir Charles of Žerotín, refused to enter into a league with the Bohemians. The fact that the Moravians did not join the Czechs at the proper time was the first great blow that the Czech cause received.

The Habsburgs were waiting for a struggle with the Czechs, and even incited it. They wished to destroy Bohemian heresy, break the influence of the Estates, and strengthen the royal power.

The Emperor Matthias was at first inclined to deal peacefully with the Czechs, but soon the war party gained the upper hand at his court. Ferdinand, the accepted King of Bohemia, was this party's leading spirit. When Matthias died in 1619, Ferdinand tried to come into his inheritance.

Ferdinand II (1619—1637). The Czechs did not believe in the promises of Ferdinand that he would preserve their former rights and privileges. Therefore they invaded Moravia and, in spite of Žerotín's disapproval, gained the Moravians for their cause. Soon afterwards the Silesians also joined the league against Ferdinand. Then from among numerous candidates they chose as King the twenty-three-year-old Frederic, Elector of the Palatinate.

The Czech Estates declared in precise terms what was at stake for them in the coming struggle with Ferdinand: they would fight "for the good of this kingdom, its souls and their salvation, the lives of its people, their property, and that honour which this Czech nation has ever had before other nations". The Czech Estates made known their stand through the words of Count Joachim Šlik: "We wish at last to free ourselves and our descendants from the Austrian (i. e. Habsburg) yoke."

White Hill, Hill Accursed!

Allies of the Czechs. The Bohemians, in choosing Frederic, hoped that he would help their cause with a substantial force. He was the head of a Protestant league, and son-in-law of James I, King of England. The Czechs rather counted on the aid of both the league and of England. They were destined to be disappointed. They did, however, gain an ally in the person of the adventurous and brave prince of Transylvania, Bethlen Gábor, administrator of Slovakia. This land also cast in its lot with Bohemia.

Ferdinand's Allies. Ferdinand, on his part, also looked for allies. The Pope was willing to help Ferdinand financially, while the Kings of Poland, Spain, and France, pledged themselves to military aid. In the middle of the year 1620, it was already evident that not only practically the whole of Catholic Europe, but many of the German Protestants as well would be on Ferdinand's side. Against him, with a remarkable singleness of purpose, stood only his own subjects: Czechs and Slovaks, Germans and Hungarians.

In the Czech Camp. The Czech army was miserably paid from the first, so that the soldiers were restless and made up for their lack of pay by pillaging. The peasant section of the population suffered extremely, and rose up dangerously in various parts of the country. The Czech army was also handicapped by the inexperience of its generals and the discord among them. Since the sixteenth century, the military ability of the Czechs had declined.



Fig. 30. The Site of the Battle of the White Hill.

It became difficult to find as many as four or five men among the Czech nobility capable of becoming efficient military officers. This incapacity was also to be seen among the peasants, who were living very prosperously. It would be unfair to reproach the higher classes for not organizing a popular movement, in which the whole nation might take part, as in Hussite times. Conditions had changed since the fifteenth century: new methods of warfare had come into use. The people were not accustomed to the use of gunpowder, while flails and scythes no longer sufficed. Attempts to teach the

people how to use the new weapons failed. Besides, the peasantry could not understand why the nobility was struggling against the Emperor. Nobody could stir up the peasants to enthusiasm: Bohemia had no second Žižka. Certainly there was sufficient reason for placing a foreigner, Duke Christian of Anhalt, at the head of the army, for he succeeded in establishing better order.

Ferdinand II was far better prepared for war. The Duke of Bavaria, Maximilian, commander-in-chief of Ferdinand's forces, invaded Bohemia with 50,000 men. The Czech army retreated as far as Praha, and took up its stand on the White Hill (Bílá Hora).

The Czech army, much smaller than the invading forces, was wearied by long marches, so that many of the soldiers cast themselves down on the ground and immediately went to sleep. Meantime the enemies were carefully considering what steps to take. Finally a mere skirmish was decided on. What started as a skirmish grew to assume great proportions: November 8, 1620, the date of this battle, will ever be written down as the blackest day in all Czech history. Before the encounter, the camp of the imperial forces was the scene of religious ceremonies. Some priests stirred up enthusiasm by their sermons, their prayers and litanies; others heard confessions, and carried the pictures of saints before their men as these were attacking the Czechs.

The Czechs worked hard all the morning to strengthen their position. After noon, the aggressors attacked the Czech left wing, led by the aged Count Thurn, who repulsed them. They received reinforcements and began to force the Czech cavalry to retreat. Thurn's horsemen, the crack regiment in the whole Czech army, when about four hundred steps away from the enemy, shot into the air, turned, and fled. This step influenced the rest, who carried out their threat that they would not fight further without pay. Confusion ensued in the left wing, and spread rapidly to the rest of the army. Troop after troop gave way and retreated in confusion, so that after only half an hour about one third of the original Czech army remained on the field of battle.

Affairs took a new turn thanks to the bravery of Anhalt's son, the twenty-one-year-old Prince Christian, who with his mounted followers resolutely attacked the right wing of the imperial army, bringing it into great straits. Unfortunately, this Czech group was surprised by an onslaught of the Polish cavalry, who had first defeated the Hungarian forces. The imperial right wing, momen-

tarily relieved, thrust itself with all its strength against young Anhalt's men and forced them to retreat. The brave young leader, twice severely wounded, fell from his horse. Meanwhile the advancing ranks of the Bavarians attacked the remaining Czech right wing, which was stationed near Hvězda.

Regiment after regiment fled. Finally, only the Moravian division, led by the young Henry Šlik, kept its position near Hvězda, and it was practically annihilated. The battle lasted for an hour and a half; the scattered Czech forces, fleeing to Praha in confusion, met with King Frederic, who had left a feast to approach the field of battle with a cavalry force of five hundred men. Learning what had happened, this "Winter King" immediately returned to the castle, and then fled from the land. Nobody thought of the defence of Praha. The conquerors entered the city by open gates.

After the Battle of the White Hill.

The Aftermath of Rebellion. The defeat of the Czech army not only ended the revolt of the Czech Estates, but sealed the fate of the whole Czech nation. The Bohemians could have continued to defend themselves, but their discipline had gone to pieces: they had lost all confidence in themselves, in their hired troops, and in their Hungarian allies. They had to give themselves up to the conqueror. The Estates of the other Czech lands followed suit. These escaped without any great damage, but the Estates of Bohemia proper, and with them the whole Czech nation, were to suffer severely for their unsuccessful rebellion.

Immediately after the battle, the imperial soldiers penetrated into the city, plundered the houses of the rich, attacked and robbed peaceful civilians in the streets. The administration of Bohemia was placed in the hands of Charles Lichtenštejn, while Moravia was intrusted to Cardinal Francis Ditrichstein.

Even before the battle it had been decided how the rebels were to be punished. The chief instigators of the rebellion were to be condemned to death, and their worldly possessions confiscated. The Estates of all the other culprits were also to be confiscated. In February the rebels were arrested and imprisoned, and heard by a special tribunal. All the rebels who had escaped and ten who had died were declared degraded, and their property was taken over by the State.

On the Old Town Square. June 21, 1621, was fixed as the day of the execution of the Czech rebels. On the preceding day, the condemned were taken to the Old Town Hall. Among them were men more than eighty years old.

On the 21st of June, great crowds were to be seen in the streets of Praha at the first grey streaks of dawn. At five o'clock in the morning, a cannon shot announced the beginning of the execution. The scaffold had been built adjoining the Hall, and had to be entered through a window on the first floor of

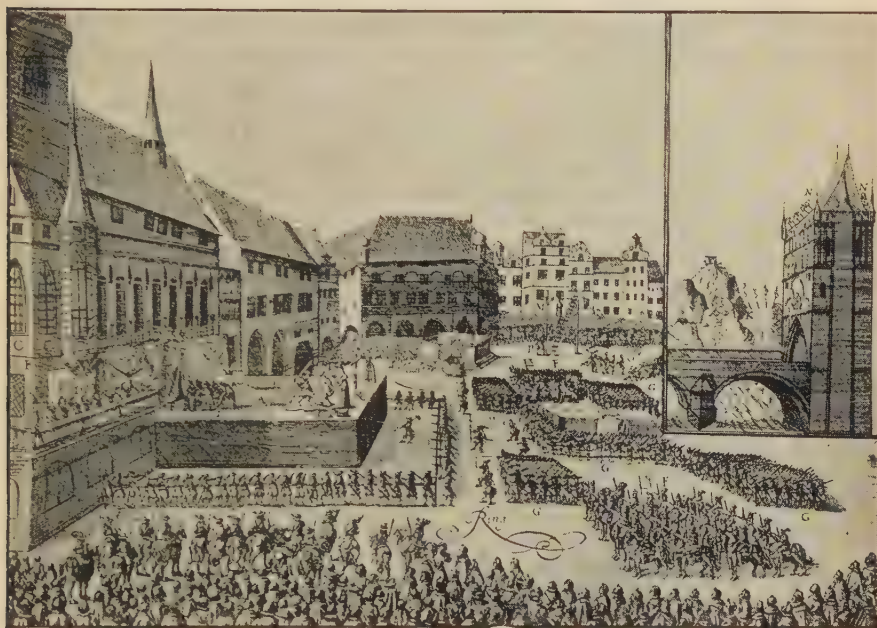


Fig. 31. The Scene on the Old Town Square, 21 June, 1621.

the building. The planks of the scaffold were covered with black cloth. A large cross and four wax candles stood in the foreground. Two divisions of cavalry and three of infantry had taken their places on the square. Immediately around the place of execution were stationed three rows of riflemen.

The judges and their chief, Charles of Lichtenštejn, together with their invited guests, sat down in reserved seats. The blowing of trumpets and the beating of drums gave the signal for the first of the condemned, Count Jáchym Ondřej Šlik, to mount the scaffold. The count glanced around him, prayed, and then, unbuttoning his black velvet coat, and kneeling down, calmly bent his head over the black cloth in front of him. A sword flashed, and Šlik's head fell from his body. The blood burst out in a torrent, staining the crucifix and running over the black cloth to the ground. A faithful servant then placed his

dead master's hand on the execution plank, where the executioner cut in off. Six grave-diggers, dressed in black, took up the count's dismembered body, wrapped it in black cloth, and carried it away. Only the severed hand remained with the executioner.

A similar fate awaited the others. Thus the seventy-four-year-old Václav Budovec of Budov, Christopher Harant of Polžice and Bezručice, heroically met their deaths. The aged Kašpar of Sulevice was then executed. The Catholic, Diviš Černín of Chudenice, whose brother Hařman directed the carrying out of the executions, was also condemned to death.

Jan Jesenius followed the condemned noblemen. He was an eminent physician, a native of Turčany in Slovakia. The punishment that overtook him was particularly cruel. First his tongue was cut out, then he was beheaded; his corpse was cut into four quarters. Dying, he believed that the day would come "when Ferdinand would suffer for his cruelty, and God's cause would be victorious."

Next in turn were the culprits from the ranks of the citizens. Some were hanged, others beaten to death; others still had their tongues nailed to the plank. The youngest of the condemned townsmen was Šimon Sušický, barely forty years old. Mounting the ladder to the gallows, he called in a mighty voice: "I betrayed nobody, I did no murder, I performed no deed worthy of the gallows, but because I was true to my country and the Word of God, I die!" The words of the eighty-year-old Henry Otto, knight of Los, show that the terror of the scene has not been exaggerated: "I have lived among barbarians, but I have never seen or heard of tyranny equal to this!"

The victor's revenge did not end with this wholesale execution but he had the corpses of the victims treated disgracefully. The heads of twelve of the dead, among them the heads of Šlik, Budovec, and Jesenius, were placed in iron cages on the Old Town Bridge Tower and elsewhere. Next to Šlik's head was placed the hand that had been severed from his body, while Jesenius's tongue, cut out while he yet lived, was nailed beside his head. Of the twenty-seven men who had suffered the death-penalty, four were Germans; according to rank, three were of the higher nobility, eight of the lower, while sixteen were citizens. All died calmly and with dignity, conscious that they were dying for their religion, which was dearer to them than life itself. The religious zeal, patriotism, ability and fame of these martyrs made them "the flower of the nation, the supporters and chief lights of the country." Distinguished thinkers, lawyers, and men of letters were among them.

The Valley of Humiliation.

Confiscations. A form of punishment more far-reaching, more wide-spread than the executions, was the confiscation of rebel property. Immediately after the Battle of Bílá Hora, the order was

given for the confiscation of the property, real and movable, of all who had taken part against the Emperor. A special commission, headed by Lord Charles Lichtenšteín, was organized for the purpose. Its acts were outrageous. Altogether, it dealt with land belonging to the nobility and towns in Bohemia worth more than five milliard Czech crowns. The Moravian Estates lost about one half as much land: Silesia, also, suffered at the hands of the Commission.

The confiscated estates were in all cases evaluated unfairly, and sold at ridiculously low prices. Besides, they were paid for with a debased currency, coined by a special association, among whose members were Lichtenšteín, the warrior Waldšteín, and the Jew Basseví. This company cheated not only the condemned, but also the State. The nobility and the towns were reduced to poverty, and more than two thirds of all the soil of Bohemia changed owners, a phenomenon the like of which Europe had not witnessed since the time of the Great Migrations.

The Emperor, lacking economic forethought, divided the confiscated property among his soldiers, especially officers, his domestic and foreign favourites, and Catholic institutions, chiefly the order of the Jesuits, who had returned to the land with the advancing imperial army. Crowds of foreigners and military adventurers* hastened into Bohemia, where their shameful services were rewarded with the estates of the native nobility. Only a part of these foreign families remained in the country. Of the families of foreign origin which formed the new Czech nobility, fifty died out before long. Thus Bohemia became "the foreigners' graveyard".

War spreads from Bohemia to the Whole of Europe. The revolt of the Czech Estates in 1618 had led to a Czech war. This in its turn grew to assume the proportions of a general European war. Since it lasted for thirty years, it is known as the *Thirty Years' War*. The cause of Frederic, Bohemia's "Winter King", was taken up by his kinsmen and co-religionists. Thus Denmark, the Netherlands, England, France, and later even Saxony and Sweden, stood against the Emperor. Central Europe suffered greatly during this war. Especially Bohemia at this period presented a mournful appearance. Castles, towns, and villages were plundered and razed

* Martin Huerta, once a tailor's apprentice, then footman and spy, may serve as an example of this class of men.

to the ground. Cattle were driven away, fields went unplanted, farms and cottages stood deserted. Misery, hopelessness, and hunger were apparent everywhere. The situation was made even more unbearable by reason of religious tyranny. Ferdinand, a thin, small, red-haired man, smiled continually, spoke little, thought little, and concerned himself mainly with the salvation of his soul; and he thought it his duty to care for the eternal salvation of his subjects, and therefore tried in every possible way to force them to accept the Catholic faith. He was convinced that by this faith alone could man attain eternal life. He preferred a materially neglected kingdom to one spiritually lost. To show that he abolished the religious liberties of the Czechs, he cut up that famous document, Rudolph's Letter of Majesty.

In 1621 he exiled all the teachers and preachers of the Calvinists and of the Brethren, and soon afterwards forbade the Utraquist Communion. Later the Lutheran preachers were also driven away. Only Catholics got positions as government and public officials and could practise trades. All Protestants were considered heretics. Priests and missionaries, especially Jesuits, made it their special task to convert them to the Roman faith. The majority of the Protestants, however, were firm and would not give in; therefore cruel, barbarous punishments were used to make them profess Catholicism: they were beaten, fined, imprisoned; the right to the marriage ceremony was denied them and their dead were refused a Christian burial. Rough soldiers accompanied the missionaries, and invented various forms of torture for the unfortunate Czechs.

Ferdinand issued a law (Mandate) in 1627, in which he declared that no non-Catholic, man or woman, nobleman, citizen, or peasant, would be suffered to remain. This law caused large numbers of emigrants to leave the land.

Before they departed, they met for the last time to bid farewell to their native land. The Czech Brethren from Litomyšl and the vicinity met on a small meadow between the deep forests of Morašice. Many a heart-sick brother kissed the land, many a brother took a clod of earth along with him to comfort him on his long journey. There is a legend that wherever the tears of the departing Brethren fell, during the sad ceremony of leavetaking, red roses grew; therefore this place has ever since been called "Red Meadow", or "Rose Meadow". The Chalice that the Brethren used for Communion was buried, it is said, in this meadow's sacred ground.

Many of the exiles bore away in their wagons only the most necessary articles, but oftentimes these meagre possessions constit-

uted their whole wealth, for little had been left to them. The emigrants belonged to all classes: 370 families of gentle blood, and 36,000 families from the ranks of the burghers, left the country. Altogether there were about 150,000 exiles, enough to make a small nation. Before the revolt Bohemia had boasted about 2,000,000 inhabitants, after the war only about 800,000 remained. Many people had died in epidemics of contagious diseases.

The emigrants went away to different parts of the world. Some found new homes in Saxony: others went to the Netherlands, to France, England, Sweden, Poland, and even to America. The Brethren also found refuge in Slovakia, where they spoke and wrote zealously for their cause, binding such "bonds between the Slavs of St Václav's Kingdom (Bohemia) and those of St Stephen's Kingdom (Hungary) as should never be torn asunder".

The Renewed Constitution. A series of laws known as "the renewed Constitution" (Obnovené zřízení zemské) was promulgated in 1627. Again Catholicism was recognized as the only legal religion in the realm. Another Estate, that of the Clergy, was added to the other three (i. e., the higher nobility, the lower nobility, and the towns), and was given a position of prime importance among them. The Archbishop and the greatest dignitaries of the Church (the Bishops and Abbots) represented the new Estate at the provincial diets. The new laws broke the influence of the towns: all the towns together, the whole Estate, were to have only one vote at the diet, while each of the individual members of the other Estates had his own vote.

The power of the diet as a whole, especially in its legislative function, was greatly lessened. A law declaring the Kingdom of Bohemia hereditary to female as well as male Habsburg heirs was also published. Foreigners were invited to Bohemia by the ruling that the German language as well as the Czech should be legal in courts of law. The language of the German minority began to be heard more and more. Language conditions were even worse in Moravia. In Silesia, German began to compete with Polish, while both Poles and Germans behaved harshly in their dealings with the Czech element there.

The changes in Bohemia were made the harder to bear by the coming of the new foreign nobility, the dependents and willing instruments of the Habsburgs. The old patriotic nobles practically disappeared. In so far as they did remain, they drew near to the

foreigners, marrying into their families and adopting their views. They came to scorn the Czech language and culture, and thus excluded themselves from the nation of their origin. They became foreigners in their own land, even while they remained at home. The appellation "Bohemian" came to have an unpleasant sound in the world: it signified heretic and rebel.

Czech Emigrants Abroad. Outstanding men were included in the ranks of the Protestants: Pavel (Paul) Skála of Zhoř, author of the "Church History"; Pavel Stránský, who wrote a Latin treatise on the Czech state, "*Res publica Bojema*"; the great teacher and prophet of a better future for Bohemia, Jan Amos Komenský, better known to the world as Comenius; the painter Charles Škreta, and many others. Artists who could not make a living in their oppressed homeland such as the engraver Václav Hollar, who found refuge in England, left with them.

Great numbers of the Protestants who remained in Bohemia were converted to the Catholic faith; not a few became sincerely attached to it. Most of them were peasants, who had to take their choice between Catholicism and death. Many accepted Rome only outwardly, and continued in their hearts to be true to the religion of their fathers. They were strengthened in their faith by Protestant books, which formed their greatest treasures, and by preachers (predikants), who came to them from across the boundaries at the risk of their lives.

The Remainder of the Thirty Years' War.

Albrecht of Valdštejn (Albert Waldstein). The Czech emigrants became accustomed to strange surroundings with difficulty. They cheered themselves with the hope that their country would be liberated, and that they would then return to their castles, manors, towns, and villages. This hope was partially realized in 1631. The Emperor was harassed by enemies, in whose services were many Bohemians. The Saxons invaded Bohemia and captured Praha. A part of the Czech emigrants returned home. The bodily remains of the martyred noblemen and citizens, still exposed in their iron cages, were taken down and piously buried. The Czech exiles had a beautiful dream of a new life in their homeland, but it was dispelled after six months by the imperial general, Albert Waldstein. Waldstein had been brought up in the religion of the Brethren. Lured by ambition, he went over to Rome and soon he gained

great wealth and position, and even became commander of the imperial army and won success and glory.

Waldšteín was an unscrupulous soldier. His army did as much damage to the land of Catholic noblemen as to Protestant possessions, so that resistance against him arose. The Emperor was forced against his will to dismiss Waldšteín, who was his creditor as well as the general of his forces. Waldšteín was greatly offended and swore revenge on the Emperor. Therefore he began to draw near to the Czech heretics.

Astrology (fortune-telling from the positions of the stars), of which he was an ardent devotee, forecast a bright future for Waldšteín, promising him a royal crown. The Czech exiles who fought in the service of Sweden, and the Swedes themselves, were to help Waldšteín to achieve his ambition. Meanwhile the Emperor, hard pressed by the invasion of Bohemia and the capture of Praha in 1631, made peace with Waldšteín, and appointed him commander-in-chief (generalissimo) of all the imperial forces. Waldšteín then expelled the invaders and the returned Czech exiles from Bohemia, and then met the Swedes in battle. Meanwhile, however, he did not lose sight of his ambitious hopes of a royal throne. The Czech emigrants strengthened his dreams, hoping that, with Waldšteín as King of Bohemia, the way would be opened for their return home. Waldšteín finally entered into negotiations with the Emperor's enemies, but he could not bring himself to take the decisive step of turning against Ferdinand outright. The court, however, learning of his treasonable plans, had him assassinated at Cheb in 1634. The hopes of the exiles were thus blighted.

The death of Waldšteín brought Czech misfortunes to a climax. The dead leader's possessions, as well as those of his friends, Adam Trčka and William Kinský, were confiscated and, with trifling exceptions, found their way into the hands of foreign adventurers. Waldšteín had desired to end the struggle, but with his death the prospects of peace were removed. The Czech lands continued to be the scene of the horrors of war.

With Waldšteín gone, the Czech exiles placed their confidence in the Swedes, in whose services many of them were fighting. They hoped that these fellow-Protestants would lead them back to their lost country. Ferdinand II, who wished to get rid of at least one of his enemies, made peace with the Saxons in 1635, giving them Upper and Lower Lusatia. Ferdinand died two years later.

Bohemia under the Rule of Ferdinand III (1637—1657). Ferdinand II was succeeded by his son, Ferdinand III. War continued to rage with the same force as before. The Swedes, together with some of the Czech exiles, penetrated into Bohemia several times. In 1639, under the leadership of John Bauer, they reached Praha; in 1642, under General Torenson, they gained temporary control of Olomouc. Both commanders were responsible for merciless pillaging. The two generals, Königsmark and Wrangel, amassed great wealth by plundering. Many artistic treasures, such as statues, pictures, precious garments, jewelry, valuable books, (for example, an ancient copy of Kosmas's Chronicle) and other articles were taken out of Bohemia and carried into Sweden and other countries. Imperial soldiers also robbed the Bohemian population without mercy. The Protestant peasants in North-eastern Moravia (the Valaši) rebelled and fought on the Swedish side. Their revolt, however, was soon crushed and two hundred of the peasants were hanged from trees along the roads.

The war was dragging on too long. Ferdinand stubbornly refused peace on the Swedish terms, for they demanded religious freedom for Bohemia. In 1648 the Swedes made their last attempt to capture Bohemia, striving especially to gain Praha. They besieged the city, and soon gained control of Hradčany and Malá Strana. A fierce battle, in which the city was at stake, was fought on the Charles bridge; Czech again fought Czech, for Czech Protestant exiles in the service of Sweden fought Czech Catholics in the service of the Habsburgs. In the thick of battle the news reached the city that peace had been proclaimed. The long and terrible war had been ended by the Treaty of Westphalia.

Faithful Catholics, celebrating the end of the war, sang "Te Deum laudamus" with all their hearts, while the Jesuits straightway renewed their activity with a feverish zeal, in an attempt to bring strayed souls back into the sacred fold.

Conditions in Bohemian lands were utterly wretched. The people suffered from both material and intellectual poverty. They lacked leaders and trustworthy priests to guide them. Some parishes lacked priests, and wherever there was one, he was as impoverished as his parishioners, and was in no position to offer them spiritual consolation. The priests were not trained for other tasks; the people could not understand their words, for many did not speak Czech well. Many of the people who had become converted to Catholicism

as adults, did not feel happy in their new-found religion. Youth, on the other hand, was enthusiastic for it, and took part in all pompous religious processions, pilgrimages, theatrical performances, and other ceremonies.

Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius). Comenius, (1592—1670) a Moravian by birth, comforted and supported the Czech emigrants in times of tribulation and trial. The exiles hoped that the Treaty of Westphalia would grant them freedom to return to their country. They were unwilling to believe, therefore, that Sweden had sold their holy cause for the sum of 600,000 silver dollars. Comenius in the name of Protestant Czechs made his voice heard, calling to Sweden not to forget the unfortunate Bohemian exiles, their late allies; but he met with no response.

The Habsburgs triumphed. The peace made at Westphalia recognized only the Roman religion in the Kingdom of Bohemia. Comenius, the comforter of his fellow-Protestants, did not give up hope. In his treatise, "Kšaft umírající matky Jednoty bratrské", ("The Last Testament of that Dying Mother, the Unity of the Brethren") (1650) he prophesied that "after the passing of the tempests of God's anger, the rule over thine own affairs will return to thee, O Bohemian nation!" For centuries his hopes remained but dreams.

He called down Heaven's blessings upon the Czech and Moravian people, hoping that they "would remain as a growing branch, a branch well nourished by waters and towering over the walls". He cried longingly: "Live, O nation blessed by the Lord, die not, and may thy descendants be without number!"

Comenius was not able to return to his beloved homeland, which remained in his thoughts even to the end of his life. The great exile died on November 15, 1670, and was buried in the Dutch town of Naarden. The name of Comenius is universally respected. The whole world honours him as the founder of modern education, the Brethren love him as their comforter, the Czech nation reveres him as its prophet.

The Reign of Leopold I.

Leopold I (1658—1705). The rule of Leopold I, son and successor of Ferdinand III, brought even greater ills.

Conditions in the Czech Lands. The people were very superstitious. Not only the peasants, but also the townsfolk and the nobility

believed more and more in astrology, magic, enchantments and ghosts. Education declined universally, schools paid more attention to mechanical memorizing than to the development of character. The decline in education is apparent in the Roman writings of the period: voluminous writings, whose purpose was to turn people away from "the poison of heresy", were its chief boast. These works terrified men's minds by sensational descriptions of everlasting torment. Peasant and townsman alike, suffering, frightened, were willing to believe all that they read or heard in sermons, and the mental horizon of the nobleman was not much wider than that of his social inferiors.

Wealth on the one hand and poverty on the other increased. Some nobles grew financially successful, others suffered from want. Land changed owners quickly. The class of petty landed proprietors disappeared almost completely. The Thirty Years' War left the towns depopulated, the peasant holdings deserted, and the peasants themselves broken in spirit.

The Counter-Reformation in Slovakia. The new religious enthusiast found in Slovakia a favourable field for his endeavours. There also the threats of the missionaries could be heard. The city of Trnava, where a Jesuit school and university were founded, became the centre of their activity.

Balbín. Even among the Jesuits, ardent Czech patriots could sometimes be found. One such was Bohuslav Balbín (1621—1688), a native of Hradec Králové. His most celebrated work, written in Latin, is entitled, "*Dissertatio apologetica pro lingua Slavonica, prae-cipue Bohemica*", in which he defended the Slavonic languages, and especially the Czech, from the attacks of enemies. The work breathes a true love for the Czech language and people.

Balbín defended the rights of the native Czech population, and reminded his readers of the wrongs that Germany had been committing against the Slavs for ages past. With the voice of a prophet he cried: "As after a period of sorrow a time of joy will sometimes follow, the Czech language will again win the place that properly belongs to it." His work ends with a moving prayer to St Václav, the patron saint of Bohemia.

Bound to the Soil. If the position of the townspeople was difficult, that of the peasants was far worse. They had known better times, but these were buried far in the distant past. For a century and a half the peasants were constant victims of hunger and want,

of religious oppression, of tortuous labour, the "robota". Their overlords were mostly foreigners, who did not feel with their unfortunate dependants, and thought that the serfs existed only for their benefit. Without his master's permission, the serf could not give his son or daughter in marriage; he could not let his son learn a trade or acquire an education, for thus the nobleman would lose a worker. The serf had to work for his master free of charge, make payments for his holdings, gives tithes to the Church (the tenth part of grain, and every tenth cow, sheep, and fowl), and pay various taxes to the Emperor: the contributions, a tax on every team of horses, and a head-tax. The overlord himself ought to have paid the "contribution", but he habitually evaded it, transferring it to the serfs. If the peasant had several sons, at least one of them was forced to wear "the white coat", that is, to join the army and there for fourteen years to serve the Emperor in wars against the Turks and other enemies.

Men from 18 to 55 and women from 17 to 50 had to labour for their lord on week-days, summer and winter alike. Only on Sundays and at night could they give their attention to their own fields. Therefore the peasants' land was insufficiently cared for. Besides labour in the field, the serfs had to break stones, work in the woods, in mines, in foundries, on buildings, erect causeways for fish-ponds, drain these ponds, shear the sheep, watch and care for the cattle, and do many other things besides. In some places, when the lords travelled at night, the serfs had to show the way with lanterns. Wealthier serfs gained exemption from labour by buying themselves out. Besides labour (robota), however, the serfs had to furnish their lord and various officials with eggs, poultry, butter, honey, and other supplies.

The official who supervised the work was the terror of the peasants; with a whip in his hand, he would call them to work and stand over them. On Saturdays all culprits assembled at the castle office. The accused were often condemned "to the bench", that is, they were flogged. A heavier form of punishment was the "wooden mule", with its sharp back, upon which the condemned was placed.

The peasants, when they sold their harvests, had little left. From their meagre profit they had to give wages to their helpers, buy the most necessary clothing and shoes, get salt for home use and for the sheep, pay off whatever debts they owed the Jewish pedlars and the local innkeeper for beer and gin, and the

fruit of the year's labour was gone. The serfs died as miserably as they had lived, and saw no relief from the misery confronting them.

Conditions in Slovakia. The Habsburgs were Kings of Hungary as well as of Bohemia. In reality, however, they controlled only northern and western Hungary, the present-day Slovakia. The rest of the kingdom was in the hands of the Turks. In Transylvania George Rákóczy was Bethlen's successor, but he ruled under the sovereignty of the Turks. These penetrated to Slovakia in 1663, ravaged it, and passed on to Moravia, while fierce Turkish horsemen even rode to Silesia. In 1664, the imperial army checked the advance of the Turks. It seemed, indeed, that Leopold had rid himself of his dangerous neighbours. Therefore he decided to use this advantage by abolishing ancient Hungarian privileges and forcing the old religion on the people more completely. The Hungarian nobility revolted, and sought the aid of Turkey and of France, whose great king, Louis XIV, was at odds with the Emperor Leopold, his brother-in-law. Slovak peasants also took part in the revolt, one of whose heads was the young nobleman, Francis Rákóczy. The Emperor had the leaders of the rebellion arrested, but pardoned them. When, however, they showed no disposition to give up the struggle, Leopold ordered that they should be again arrested, and dealt with them more severely. In 1671, twenty-two of them were executed, while three hundred noblemen and three hundred Protestant ministers were imprisoned or sold into slavery.

The Hungarian revolt did not end even here. In 1678, the twenty-year-old Emerich Tórköly placed himself at the head of the dissatisfied Hungarians. The young leader came of a wealthy Hungarian-Slovak family. Thanks to French influence, the Turks recognized him as the ruler of Upper Hungary, which, however, continued to be tributary to them, while he planned to become King of all Hungary. The Turks began to harass the Emperor. In 1683 they besieged Vienna. The city defended itself ably, and with the aid of the King of Poland, John Sobieski, repulsed the Turks. Thenceforth these suffered one defeat after another. Within two years they lost Northern Hungary and, after much heavy fighting, almost the whole of the land fell into the hands of the Emperor.

When the struggle between Leopold's army and the Turks was at its worst, Tórköly came to the Turkish aid, but in 1687 the young leader's men were defeated and the rebels were captured

by Leopold's victorious general, Anthony Carafy, who presided at their trial at Prešov. Thirty noblemen and townsmen were tortured and then executed. In Slovakia, "the slaughter-house of Prešov" remains a terrible living memory to this day.

Many lives were sacrificed in the Turkish wars. Hungary was redeemed at a great financial cost as well. The Czech lands bore the chief burden of this expense. The nobles were to pay, but they shifted the taxes on to their serfs, who suffered to the utmost. Little wonder that in 1680 peasants in various districts of Moravia, Silesia, and Bohemia made insurrections against their masters. The unfortunate serfs cried, "We have nothing to lose except our lives: therefore we risk these lives to win at least something for ourselves and our descendants!" The peasant uprisings were put down without mercy, and all who had taken part in them were cruelly punished.

The Chodové. The free peasants in the vicinity of Domažlice in south-western Bohemia were in a peculiar position: from time immemorial they had been the guardians of the frontier forests. They were called the *Chodové* (choditi — to walk, that is, they walked the forests and guarded the frontiers). During celebrations they carried a special flag, bearing a black dog's head for its emblem. Therefore, they were also known as *Psohlavci* (pes — dog; hlava — head). The Kings of Bohemia, their overlords, gave them important privileges in return for their services. After the Battle of Bílá Hora, the Lamminger family became their overlords, and these new masters cared nothing for the age-old rights and customs of the Chodové. Maximilian Lamminger, whom they called Lomikar, became their greatest enemy. After the peasant insurrection of 1680, he ordered the Chodové to hand over to him their list of privileges, which he pronounced null and void. The peasants refused to obey, and appealed to the Emperor for justice. A special commission was appointed to investigate the truth of their plea. Lomikar meanwhile ordered them to labour in the fields like ordinary serfs. When they refused, the overlord considered this refusal a rebellion, and called an army out against them. The Chodové sent messengers to Praha to present their case. At Praha, however, the list of privileges which they had carried with them was taken away from them and destroyed, while the messengers themselves were imprisoned. The Chodové, learning of their failure, prepared for vehement resistance. They were defeated, and had to promise that they would never again hail their overlords to court. Three

of the messengers were condemned to death, but the sentence was carried out against only one of them, against John Sladký, called Kozina, the most eloquent pleader for the inherited rights of the Chodové. Kozina was hanged at Plzeň, on November 28, 1695. All his countrymen, even small children, were forced to witness his end, in order that they might bear in mind what punishment awaits disobedient peasants. According to legend Kozina, mounting the gallows, turned to his master, who was present, and called: "Lomikar, Lomikar, I summon you to meet me in one year from now before the Lord's Judgment Seat; the Lord will decide which of us..." The executioner silenced him for ever, before the rest of his thought could be expressed in words. Lomikar, it is said, actually died one year after that.

All over the land, the helpless peasants could but sigh grievously: "Our Lord! Our Father in Heaven! What sufferings we poor serfs must endure!"

Czech Lands under Joseph I and Charles VI.

Joseph I (1705—1711). Leopold was succeeded by his gifted son, Joseph I, who gave many fair hopes of better times, especially in Bohemia.

From his father the new ruler inherited a war with his uncle, Louis XIV, King of France, a war that had dragged on since 1700, and is known as the War of the Spanish Succession. The apple of discord was the great Spanish kingdom, which included Spain proper, the Netherlands, and the Spanish colonial possessions across the Atlantic. Joseph I also had to face the Hungarian revolt, which at this time broke out anew. The Hungarian rebels were led by Francis Rákóczy the Younger who, unlike his father and grandfather, professed the old faith, for he had been educated by the Jesuits at Jindřichův Hradec and Praha. He longed for the Hungarian throne as had his predecessors before him. Subcarpathian Russia became this time the centre of the revolt. As before, the peasants, hoping for a better future under Rákóczy, took part. The daring leader gained possession of the whole of Slovakia, Subcarpathian Russia, and even Transylvania.

The struggle with the Habsburgs reached its height in 1707, when the diet which Rákóczy had called denied the Habsburgs' right to the Hungarian throne for ever; but in 1708 Rákóczy was overcome near Trenčín. Before long, Northern Hungary again fell under the control of the Emperor.

Charles VI, the Last of his Line (1711—1740). In 1718 Charles VI gained the remainder of Hungary in his successful wars with the Turks. Having no male heirs, he tried to insure the hereditary rights of his female heirs by a law called the *Pragmatic Sanction*. According to this law, the Habsburg possessions were to be the indivisible inheritance of the eldest male Habsburg heirs for ever: and if there were no direct male heirs, the nearest female heirs and their descendants were to inherit the throne. The Emperor desired the Czech and Hungarian diets to recognize the Pragmatic Sanction, and tried also to gain the approval of his neighbours, for he dearly wished his daughter, Maria Theresa, to come into her rights without any difficulty. To reach these ends, he had to make great sacrifices. He bought some of his neighbours by supporting them in costly wars. Towards the end of his reign, as the ally of Russia, he became involved in a war with Turkey (1737—1739). The war was not a fortunate venture. Since the army cost tremendous sums of money, the Emperor was forced to establish various taxes and forced payments (for example, taxes on beer, wine, salt; an excise on food stuffs, a payment on each set of playing cards). The population bore these added burdens unwillingly and with difficulty.

Gradually the Czech lands began to improve, due to an advancement in agriculture and cattle-raising; but only the larger estates profited, while the peasant population continued to suffer from want, as is shown by the life of one Jura Janošík. This Slovak hero with his companions, youths from the forests, took his revenge on the rich overlords who had beaten his father, a labourer, to death. He took away from the rich and gave generously to the poor. He seemed unconquerable. Finally he was captured, when, as legend goes, an old woman threw dried peas under his feet, so that stumbling, he could not fight, and fell an easy prey to the authorities. He died by the hangman's hand in 1713, never having bowed his head to his oppressors, nor having begged for mercy.

Even commerce and industry grew livelier, but again it was only the nobles who began to found glass factories, and to manufacture woollen, linen, and cotton cloth on a large scale. The prosperity of the higher classes increased and was evident also in the rise of the arts.

The Arts. The churches and palaces of the nobility towered up proudly in contrast to the modest homes of the townspeople and

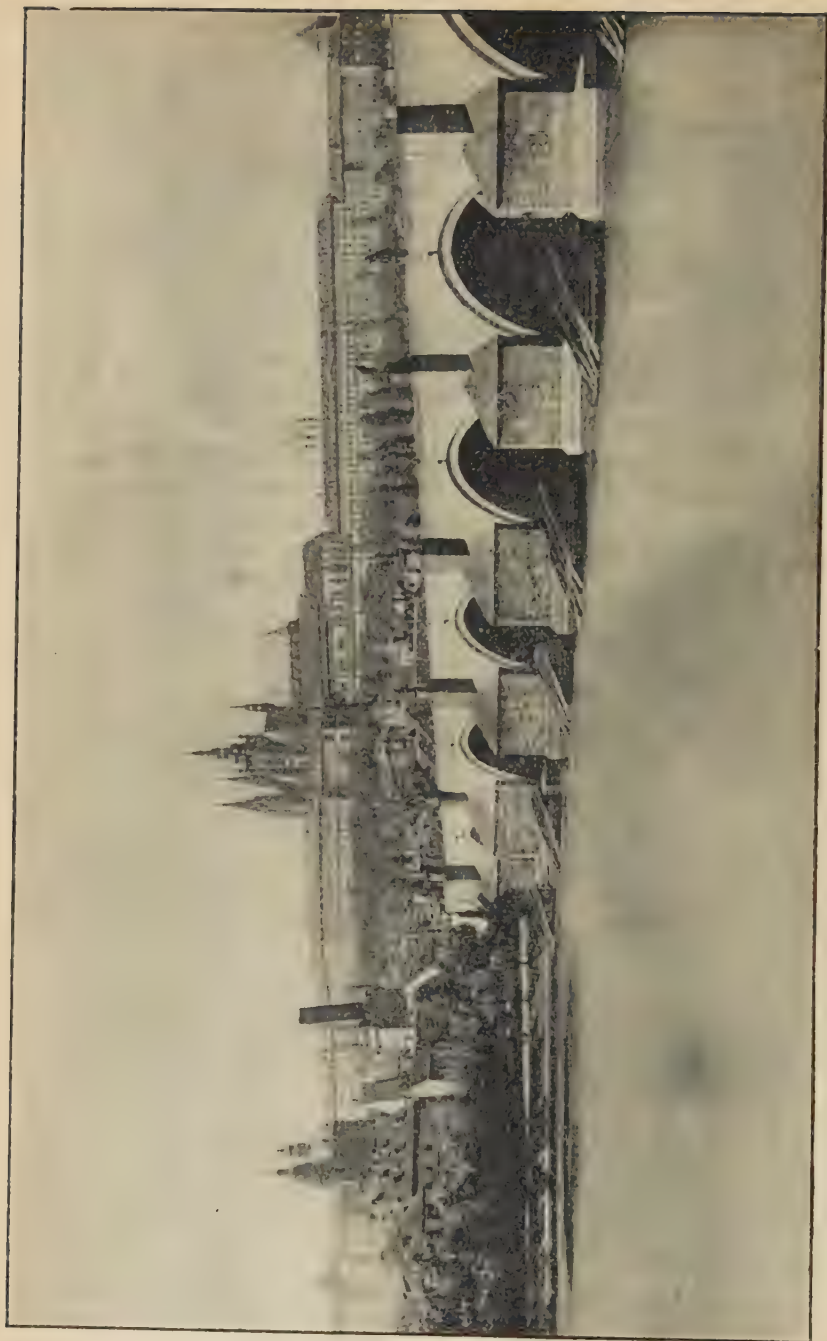


Fig. 32. Charles Bridge and the Hradčany.

the wooden farm-houses and cottages of the peasants. The nobles built in the fashionable new style of architecture called *baroque*. Its outstanding characteristics are its spiral columns, its snail-shell motive in design, its marble decorations and rich gilded carvings. The most celebrated architects of the period were Christ-



Fig. 33. Church of St Nicholas, Malá Strana, Praha.

opher and Kilian Dinzenhofer, father and son, whose joint work is to be seen in the church of St Nicholas on the Malá Strana at Praha.

The sculptors, John and Ferdinand Brokoff, also father and son, worked on the decorations of new churches and made the statues for the Charles bridge. Matthew Braun, a native of Tyrol,

collaborated with them in this task. Braun had long worked on the estate of the art-loving Count Francis Anthony Spork in Kuks and Lysá on the Elbe. The distinguished painter, Peter Brandl, created beautiful altar-paintings, while Václav Vavřinec Rainer decorated the ceilings and walls of the churches. John Kopecký, born in Slovakia of Czech emigrant parents, won fame as a portrait painter.

The Darkness before the Dawn. The Jesuits impressed the people by a fine show of splendour and riches, by the gold, precious stones and pearls, with which they decorated the altar cloths and priestly robes. The new religious authorities exalted the figure of John Nepomucký, that Dr John of Pomuk whom Václav IV had ordered to be cast from the bridge into the river below. This figure took on legendary attributes along with his new name, and was classed among the saints. Even St Václav himself was overshadowed by the new saint. The pomp and ceremony with which John Nepomucký was proclaimed a saint was equalled only by the splendid celebrations at Příbram, at which the miraculous statue of the Virgin on the Holy Hill (Svatá Hora) was crowned.

The Jesuit, Anthony Koniáš (1691—1760) of Praha, became an exemplary champion of the Church. He fought heresy with all his might. Tirelessly he preached, and searched with zeal for forbidden Protestant books. When he found them, he locked them in monastery libraries, burnt them, or at least “improved” them, scratching out objectionable sentences, or tearing out whole leaves at a time. When the books were thus “improved”, he would return them to their owners. He did not even spare the “Czech Chronicle” written long before by Aeneas Silvius, afterwards Pope Pius II. The only literary consolation of the people at this period was the “Czech Chronicle” by the Roman priest, Václav Hájek of Libočany, printed in 1541.

Koniáš himself confessed that he consigned some 30,000 heretical volumes to the flames with his own hand, one half of which were written in the Czech language. He also made a general list of heretical books which he condemned to be burned at sight.

CHAPTER VII.

Czech Lands in the Time of Enlightened Despotism.

The Rule of Maria Theresa, Joseph II, and Leopold II.

Maria Theresa (1740—1780). Upon the death of Charles VI, his twenty-three-year-old daughter, Maria Theresa, became the mistress of Bohemia, Hungary, and the Alpine lands. No sooner however, had Charles VI been buried at Vienna, than in Germany his most powerful neighbours put in their claims for the inheritance, utterly disregarding the lawful rights of Maria Theresa. Especially the Elector of Bavaria, Charles Albert, husband of the daughter of Joseph I, wished to gain possession of Bohemia. Aided by Saxony and France, he invaded Bohemia, and at Praha was proclaimed King by a section of the Estates. Simultaneously Frederic II of the Hohenzollern dynasty, King of Prussia, invaded the Czech lands, and took possession of Silesia almost without a struggle. Thus a long war was started over the Habsburg inheritance, known in history as the War of the Austrian Succession (1740—1748).

A Period of Wars. The allies arranged among themselves that they would divide Maria Theresa's kingdom: Bohemia and the crown of the Holy Roman Emperor should go to the Bavarian Elector, Charles Albert; Moravia to the Saxons, and Silesia to the Prussians. Maria Theresa resisted the attacks of her enemies with all her might. When she saw that she could not withstand their combined efforts, she made peace with the King of Prussia, in which she granted him the greater part of Silesia (without the Opava and Těšín districts), and Kladsko. Then her army drove the French and the Bavarians out of the land, and she had herself crowned Queen of Bohemia. The coronation naturally took place at Praha. Meanwhile the Elector of Bavaria was chosen Holy Roman Emperor, as Charles VII.

The Queen took advantage of the peace with Prussia by launching an offensive against Bavaria. With the aid of the English she captured the country. The King of Prussia grew uneasy at this success, and made war on Bohemia anew. Maria Theresa could not hope to win with Prussia against her, therefore peace was again concluded in 1745, which only confirmed the treaty of 1742. Soon afterwards, Maria Theresa's husband, Francis Stephen, of the noble French family of Lorraine, was elected Holy Roman Emperor, Francis I (1745—1765). Maria Theresa was thenceforth known as Empress. In Bohemia and Hungary she continued to rule as Queen, independently of her husband.

The loss of Silesia was greatly regretted by the Empress; and therefore she made plans for regaining it. In the numerous wars which she led against her neighbours, she had at various times various allies: besides England, Russia aided her, and finally France itself cast in its lot on her side. The alliance of France with the Habsburgs, so unusual as to have been called the "Diplomatic Revolution", was negotiated by Václav Kounic, a clever diplomat of Czech birth. Thus when England turned against Maria Theresa in her next war with Prussia, France took its place. This struggle, which lasted from 1756—1763, is known as the Seven Years' War.* Again Bohemia bore the heaviest burden of the fighting. Praha was bombarded by the Prussians for twenty-one days in 1757; 80,000 shots were fired on the city, 880 houses were wrecked. A bloody battle was fought near Kolín on June 8, 1757, in which the Prussian troops were overwhelmingly defeated by the French and Czech forces under the leadership of General Daun. The Czechs long afterwards celebrated this and other French generals in numerous songs.

War, as usual, brought misery and want in its wake. Probably at this time originated that popular song: "Mother, times are hard! The Brandenburgs are here, they wear high caps on their heads, they steal our chickens and geese!"

Maria Theresa tried in vain to reconquer Silesia; but having failed, she made peace with Frederic of Prussia in 1763 at Hubertsburg (near Leipzig). The fate of Silesia and Kladsko was sealed: they were finally separated from the Czech crown.

* Its counterpart in America, in which France lost its great American colonial empire to England, is sometimes known as the French and Indian War. England also won most of the French possessions in India.

With Silesia lost, Maria Theresa sought compensation elsewhere, though this loss was never fully outweighed. In 1772, she took over a large piece of Polish territory, in the so-called *First Partition of Poland*, agreed on between herself, Frederic of Prussia, and Catherine II, Empress of Russia. Somewhat later, Maria Theresa also gained Bukovina from the Turks. The last war between Maria Theresa and Frederic of Prussia took place in 1778, when the Prussian army invaded Bohemia in order to prevent the Empress from annexing Bavaria. Compared with the storm of preceding wars, this struggle was but shower. It has been called the *Potato War*, for it seems to have been at this time that the cultivation of potatoes (potatoes — brambory, from the name Brani-bory, i. e. Brandenburg) began in Bohemia.

Maria Theresa's Reforms. The Empress, in order to make herself secure against the power of the Prussians, fortified Hradec Králové, where the Orlice River flows into the Elbe. She built the strongholds of Josefov and Terezín in strategic positions. The fortifications of Praha, Vyšehrad, and Olomouc were strengthened. It was necessary to make important changes in the army; therefore a standing army of 108,000 men was established on the French and Prussian patterns, replacing the former mercenaries. The drafting of recruits took place regularly, and in order to know how many men there were in the country fit for service, a census was taken in 1753. Noblemen, clergymen, government officials, students, weavers, and other groups were exempt from military service. Military schools were founded for the education of army officers.

Until this time, the administration of the Czech lands was in the hands of the highest provincial offices, the *místodržitelsví*, under the control of the Estates. Maria Theresa changed the official title, *místodržitelsví* to the *imperial-royal gubernium*, with specially trained paid officials to do the work. The lands had been divided into districts, *kraje*; Maria Theresa increased their number, and replaced their old heads, who had been recruited from the nobility, with new imperial-royal district officials. Their power also began to extend over the towns. Somewhat later, in 1784, the centres of town administration changed their Czech name *úřad* to the Latin *magistrát* while the work of town government was also entrusted to imperial-royal representatives.

Before 1749, contact between Vienna (the Emperor or Empress) and the Czech Land Diet (the Estates) had been maintained through

the medium of the Czech Court Office, headed by the highest chancellor who was always a Czech nobleman. A similar institution had been established for the Austrian (Alpine) lands. Maria Theresa joined these two together in one office, called the *Direktorium*, which later became known as the *Czech-Austrian Office*. With the abolition of the Czech Court office fell the last vestige of Bohemian independence.

Maria Theresa also made important judicial reforms. She limited the judicial power of the overlords and the towns, who had formerly had the right to judge and condemn, to torture and execute offenders. In Bohemia alone there were 378 courts of law having the right to impose the death penalty. The Empress reduced their number to thirty, and appointed judges who knew and understood the laws. Work on a code of criminal procedure was already under way, in which torture and witch burning were done away with, but even in later times people were branded, publicly flogged, and chained in subterranean prisons at Brno, at Mukačevo, and elsewhere.

The Empress saw that the lot of the peasant classes could be improved only by education; and that schools were urgently needed. Education was still in the hands of the Jesuits and the Piarists. In the time of intellectual darkness after the Thirty Years' War schools were few and feeble. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, teachers had had a University education, but times had changed: Czech teachers of the eighteenth century were recruited from the ranks of run-away students, veteran soldiers, craftsmen, farmers and church sextons, and many of these devoted only their spare time to teaching. Inefficient teachers taught in poor quarters, for neither lords nor serfs understood the importance of education. In 1773 the Pope suppressed the order of the Jesuits, and the State took charge of education. In all parishes public schools of one or two classes called *Trivial Schools*, were established. Children from six to twelve years of age attended them on week-days, older children "repeated" their learning on Sundays.

Besides religion, the subjects taught were the three r's (reading, writing, and reckoning) and the elements of agriculture. The boys were taught how to improve the fields and gardens, raise cattle, bees, silk-worms, and how to cultivate flax; the girls learned sewing, knitting and cooking.

Larger towns, such as Hradec Králové and Klatovy, boasted new *Principal Schools* where the children learned the fundamentals



Fig. 34. Brno, Moravia.

of Latin, geography, history, natural history, rhetoric, drawing, geometry and social economy, as well as religion and the *three r's*. *Normal Schools* were established in the leading towns. Here the future teachers received their education. These schools were conducted in the German tongue, which some zealous souls tried to enforce even in the Trivial Schools. The only secondary school at the time was the *Gymnasium* with its five-year course: the first three grades of the *Gymnasium* were conducted in German, the latter two in Latin. Important changes were wrought at the University, where German replaced Latin. The aim of the course at the *Gymnasium* and the University was to train a class of government officials who should be, above all, conscious of their duties to the State.

In 1765 the son of the Empress, Joseph II, became fellow-ruler with his mother. Immediately upon his father's death he was elected Holy Roman Emperor. Joseph II was greatly grieved to see the miserable condition of the peasants, which he observed at first hand. The government considered how best to help them, but without result. The masses began to be impatient and uneasy, especially when they heard vague rumours that the Empress had abolished forced labour (*robot*) long before, and that their overlords were keeping the matter a secret. Peasant dissatisfaction grew; they began refusing to work for their masters and to pay their taxes, which soldiers were sternly collecting. Secret agents and emigrants from Prussia, Silesia and Lusatia were stirring up the peasants to disobedience. Thus in 1775 a great peasant revolt, brought on by unbearable oppression and a desire for religious liberty, broke out in north-eastern Bohemia. Serfs banded together, assailing castles, churches, parish houses; large groups of the rebels marched on Praha. They were attacked by a military force near Chlumec (on the Cidlina River), and they were scattered.* The leaders of the revolt were captured and hanged; the others were imprisoned and flogged.

A peasant, John Franěk Vavák, bailiff at Milčice near Poděbrady, recounts these events in his *Memoirs*.

Although the serfs near Chlumec failed so miserably, their revolt served to call Maria Theresa's attention to peasant problems. On August 13, 1775, she issued a Labour Edict, in which peasant

¹ Even today, when an affair turns out badly, it is said to have "succeeded like the peasants near Chlumec".

duties were clearly set down, and the greatest evils of serfdom were removed. The Empress hoped to better the condition of the people. In order that they might make better profits, she recommended the cultivation of clover, flax, beet, and potatoes (which at first were very unpopular). Industries were expanding favourably, especially spinning and weaving mills and glass factories, while lace-making and the manufacture and stringing of glass beads were beginning to flourish. Unfortunately, the factory owners in the boundary-districts of Bohemia became the agents of Germanization over the whole countryside.

The Reign of Joseph II.

Joseph II (1780—1790). Joseph II, the son of Francis Stephen of Lorraine and Maria Theresa, became sole ruler of the Czech lands upon his mother's death in 1780. He considered the good of the state and the happiness of his subjects as his sacred duty. Wishing to achieve these ends as quickly as possible, he often disregarded the personal and national prejudices of his people. He ruled as a despot, with absolutely unlimited powers.

Reforms. An enemy of pomp and display, Joseph II did not have himself crowned either King of Bohemia or King of Hungary. Maria Theresa had not always agreed with his ideas of reform; loyal to Rome, she had not allowed the laws against the Protestants to be revoked. She had, however, renewed the provisions whereby Papal bulls (laws) could be proclaimed within the realm only by royal consent. She had exerted her influence with the Pope to abolish many Catholic holidays; she had fought superstition, limited pilgrimages, and made the novices' entry into convents more difficult; she had established a regular list of fees to be paid the clergy on special occasions such as weddings and funerals. Joseph II went still further: he limited the number of Church holidays even more, and ordered that the patronal festivals (*posvícení*), celebrated in each locality on the day of its patron saint, should all be held on one day. He tried to limit needless luxury at funerals and to create a demand for the cloth woven in the Krkonoše (Giant Mountains) in north-eastern Bohemia. Therefore he ordered that the dead should be wrapped in linen and buried without coffins.

The Emperor caused an uproar of protest to arise when he began to abolish monasteries, leaving only those that took care of

the sick, or furthered science, or educated the young. The property of the suppressed convents was confiscated and used for a religious fund, from which new parishes and dioceses were founded. Religious brotherhoods had to give up their property in favour of workhouses and hospitals.



Fig. 35. A Farmstead in Northern Bohemia.

Joseph II had no sympathy for the historical past of Bohemia, nor respect for art and science; he did not spare even the memorable Bethlehem chapel. Gold and silver articles from the abolished monasteries, churches, and chapels were sent to the Vienna mint. Precious antiques and books were sold very cheaply and taken out of the country.

The granting of religious freedom was the most daring reform the Emperor attempted. On October 27, 1781, he published the

Toleration Edict, by which Protestants and Greek Catholics were given the right to worship according to the demands of their religion. Jews were not to live in the enforced isolation that had up to that time been theirs.

On November 1, 1781, he promulgated a new law by which the ancient institution of serfdom was abolished. The peasants would no longer need their Lord's consent to get married, to learn a trade, to study, or to move to another district. This law swept away the restrictions on personal freedom; the duty of labour, the *robot*, however, remained.

In Joseph II's time, the censorship ban was lifted. The Jesuits had until 1773 carefully examined the contents of Czech and other books. The new freedom of the press enabled radical, revolutionary thoughts to enter our country from the lands of their birth, England, France, and Germany. People breathed more freely. The Czechs admitted that Emperor Joseph II not only "liberated their land from the bonds of slavery", but also enlightened it.

Leopold II (1790—1792). The Emperor was forced on his deathbed to revoke many of his reforms. His brother and successor, Leopold II, removed many of the others; Leopold had himself crowned King of Bohemia. During his stay at Praha in 1791, an Industrial Exhibition was inaugurated, the first of its kind in Europe.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Resurrection.

The Reign of Emperor Francis II (1792—1835).

The Age of the French Revolution. Emperor Leopold was succeeded by his son, the untalented Francis II (1792—1835). Ever since the end of Joseph II's rule, the cries of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, coming from France had echoed over our country. In France, these new mottoes had spread among the young people, among peasants and townspeople, who were weary of bearing the load of taxation, while nobles and Churchmen were free from the burden. The loud cries of French dissatisfaction with the existing order of things reached the ears of the Czechs, who knew from experience what it means to suffer. They therefore followed with interest the situation in France; they rejoiced to see the oppressed struggle for their rights, they were glad to see them victorious. The Czechs were shaken by the news that a revolution had broken out in France, that the Church possessions there had been confiscated, that the privileges of the nobility had been abolished, that the French King had been imprisoned and later executed, and that Francis II had therefore declared war on France. The Czechs eagerly followed the news from the battlefields. The fate of the Austrian monarchy during the second half of the eighteenth century was in the hands of Maria Theresa's famous adviser, Chancellor Václav Kounic, while Klement Metternich was in control during the first half of the nineteenth century. Struggles with France held the attention of the Monarchy during the greater part of Francis II's reign.

The Age of Napoleon. At the dawn of the nineteenth century, France was led by one of the most arresting figures in history, by Napoleon Bonaparte, who had raised himself from the rank of a petty army officer to that of French Emperor. In a short time he succeeded in pushing the boundaries of France extremely far afield.

The Emperor Francis could not prevent the redoubtable Napoleon from gaining power over practically the whole of Germany. In 1804, Francis II accepted the title of Emperor of Austria, which really meant the Emperor of Bohemia, Hungary, and the Alpine (Austrian) lands. After his crushing defeat at the Battle of the Three Emperors (of France, of Russia, and of Austria) at Slavkov in Moravia in 1805, Francis had to give up the title of Holy Roman Emperor for ever.

The Emperor Francis did not fare any better in his next war against Napoleon, in 1809; defeated, he was forced to give his daughter, Maria Louisa, to Napoleon in marriage. This family tie



Fig. 36. The Tomb of Peace, Slavkov.

with the French Emperor forced Francis to become Napoleon's ally in the latter's war on Russia in 1812. In the Russian Campaign, the great army of the "Little Corporal", as Napoleon was called, met with disaster: cold and starvation played havoc with the French, unaccustomed to the climate of the great country they were invading.

The Germans had long since been wishing to rid themselves of the control of the hated Corsican, Napoleon, in whom they saw their oppressor; therefore they enthusiastically entered the ranks of his enemies, whom even the Emperor Francis finally joined. Near Leipzig and Dresden was fought a series of battles. A battle was also fought on Bohemian soil at Chlumec near Teplice. The Czechs favoured the Russians, for they considered Russia a sister

nation; the people of Praha joyously welcomed the Russian soldiers, the Cossacks, and learned their beautiful songs.

Napoleon succumbed in October 1813 in the uneven struggle with his numerous enemies. At the Battle of the Nations near Leipzig, he was completely defeated. He was forced to abdicate, and to retire to the island of Elba in the Mediterranean Sea. France was again proclaimed a Kingdom, as it had been in the old days.

The Congress of Vienna. After the fall of Napoleon, the rulers of Europe or their representatives (with the exception of Turkey) met in Vienna to remake the map of Europe. The victory over Napoleon was celebrated by extravagant balls and festivals of all sorts. Suddenly the diplomats in Vienna were interrupted in their negotiations and their merry-making by the astounding news that Napoleon had escaped from Elba and had again taken command in France, gathering about him a great French army. Even Napoleon's great military genius could not overcome the onslaught of the allies, for all the great powers of Europe stood against him. Just one hundred days from the time he had left Elba, he was defeated at Waterloo, and exiled to the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic, where he died in 1821.

The Congress of Vienna had arranged for the union of the German states, with Austria at the head. This was not, however, a revival of the Holy Roman Empire. Austria brought the Czech as well as the Alpine lands into this league, for these had in former days been considered parts of the German (Holy Roman) Empire. Austria also gained Lombardy and Venice in Northern Italy.

Enlightenment and Patriotism.

Inflow of New Ideas. The new ideas that were the moving forces of revolutionary changes in Western Europe and in America also penetrated to the Czech and Austrian lands. At first they reached only noble and scientific circles. Much was said and written about religious toleration and love for one's neighbours. These ideas are known as the *enlightenment*, the time in which they flourished as the *Age of Enlightenment*. The new spirit made itself felt in Bohemia chiefly in scientific literature, which was written almost exclusively in the Latin and German tongues. Much devoted attention was given to the study of Czech history and law, to numismatics (the study of old coins), and Czech, Moravian, and Silesian

topography. At first it was in monastery cells that such study found most favour; later, university professors and private scholars pursued it. At first they came from German circles, later from Czech ones as well. Bohemian scientists were fond of studying their nation's past and considered themselves good sons of their mother country, but they were firmly convinced that the Czech nation as such was dead. They did not realize that in the peasant class there resided the possibility of a healthy national life, a possibility that needed only the proper time and the proper guidance for its fullest realization.

The Society of Learning was founded in 1772 to support the development of science; later it was called the "Royal Czech Society of Learning". Its members devoted themselves to Czech national history, language, and literature, but also to the natural sciences and mathematics.

Joseph Dobrovský (1753—1829), an enlightened priest, was one of the leading luminaries of the period. His fame spread far and wide beyond the boundaries of his own country. Dobrovský purified the Czech language by substituting good old Bohemian words for expressions that had been adopted from the German, or had been formed incorrectly. He introduced words from kindred Slavonic languages. He put his great specialized learning to good use when he wrote a Czech grammar and a history of Czech literature, both published in German.

The Czech Language. Joseph II wished all the people of his realm to speak one language. He hoped that this would bind all parts of his Empire together more closely, and would cause the inhabitants to love each other with a brotherly love. For this universal tongue he chose German, the use of which he applied to schools and offices. Joseph's plan, however, caused a general cry of protest to arise, so that soon there appeared a whole series of "Defences of the Czech Language and Nationality". Almost all of these writings had for their model that "Apology" of Balbín, which was published for the first time as late as 1775. Czechs, Moravians, and Slovaks all agreed in defending the Czech language.

The need of a knowledge of the popular tongue was felt more and more. Priests, physicians, lawyers, teachers, even the government officials themselves, could not very well manage without it, in so far as their work brought them into contact with the Czech

people. Therefore in 1791 a Chair of Czech Language and Literature was established at the University of Praha, with Francis Martin Pelcl as its first occupant. "The New Czech Chronicle" became Pelcl's most popular work.

Kramerius (1759—1808). A figure of great importance in the flowering of Czech literature at this time was Václav Matěj (Matthew) Kramerius, who devoted himself heart and soul to authorship and publishing.

Kramerius's publishing-house was the celebrated Czech Expédice, little known to the still Germanized inhabitants of Praha, but very much appreciated by the people in the country and in the small towns, who read zealously, and even founded Readers' Clubs. All the year round, but especially before St Václav's Day (September 28) and St John Nepomucký's Day (May 16), country visitors came to Kramerius for a new supply of books. They met and talked in his shop, and returned home strengthened and encouraged. A paper edited by Kramerius, The Praha Post News ("Pražské poštovské noviny") also had a favourable effect on the people. Later he published the Imperial Royal Patriotic News ("C. k. vlastenecké noviny").

Czech Theatres. The people were greatly influenced by the drama, as well as by literature. Praha and other Czech and Moravian towns occasionally witnessed the presentation of various plays by travelling companies. The actors were Italians and Germans. At Praha there were several theatres, of which the most celebrated was devoted to the Nation and the Muses ("Patriae et Musis"). This theatre was in later times called Stavovské, ("belonging to the Estates"); in 1787 it gave the first performance of the famous Italian opera, Don Juan, composed by Mozart and dedicated to the people of Praha. In the history of the Czech theatre, an important place belongs to Bouda, ("The Booth"), a comfortable building on the Horse Market, which today is Praha's leading boulevard, Václavské náměstí. In the Bouda, plays were given both in Czech and in German. The Emperor with his court visited this building in 1787 and allowed the theatre to be called "The Imperial Royal Patriotic Czech Theatre". The plays given there were great favourites with the Czechs, as is seen by the enthusiastic poems of one Václav Melezínek, a ginger-bread maker by trade, who was also a great theatre-lover.

Czech Poetry. Bohemian authors also attempted to write poetry in Czech. The early fruits of their efforts were very poor, but at least these men had the praiseworthy desire of showing that the Czech tongue is musical and may be used in poem and song. The efforts of these tireless, modest workers served to awaken the Czech nation to a new life, to a resurrection.

On the Threshold of the Nineteenth Century.

Reaction Triumphant. The diplomats who took part in the Congress of Vienna were glad that the horrors of war were over. They formed a Holy Alliance, a league of brotherly faith. The members of the Holy Alliance pledged themselves to be just in all their actions, in accordance with the spirit of the Bible. Soon, however, it became apparent that what they really wanted was to strengthen their own power; they found support in the Church, which helped to inspire a respect for the ruling dynasties. A close co-operation between the temporal and spiritual powers, between the throne and the altar, was encouraged especially by the revived Jesuit order. The Powers sought to check all national movements, to keep everything as it had been before the French Revolution; therefore each nationalistic flutter of life was crushed out by the police, and people eyed each other with mutual distrust. Czech writers, who wrote under typically Czech pseudonyms, such as Vladislav, Liboslav, Hostivít, Sudipráv, Dobromila, and such like, awakened the suspicions of the police, who saw in these names the signs of secret clubs and societies. Every Czech as such was a natural object of suspicion to the Austrian government, and the very word "*Slav*" caused it anxiety; only with reluctance did it allow the Czechs to proclaim their kinship with the Moravians, the Silesians, and the Slovaks. In the era of Metternich the Czechs could not breathe freely; a new period of spiritual oppression had arrived.

Economic Conditions. The terms of material life were again difficult. Taxes were high, but even a forced loan did not suffice to pay the debts into which the government had fallen during its costly wars. The government began printing paper money to relieve it from embarrassment, but the output of the new bills was so large that they soon began to decline in value. In 1811 the State went bankrupt, and even wealthy people became penniless. The

value of the bills and of copper coins fell to one fifth of their nominal value. The result was a rise in prices, which lasted for several years.

The government paid increasing attention to agriculture, which was also encouraged by newly-founded patriotic societies. The benefit was reaped primarily by the large estates. The favourable development of agriculture was aided by new inventions. Trade and industry flourished especially in Northern Bohemia, where both water power and a cheap supply of labour were available. Enterprising foreigners founded factories there, and large new German towns sprang up. The Czech natives lacked the capital and the business spirit necessary for becoming industrial magnates. The beer-industry, glass-making, and the manufacture of various wood-products had long been profitable. At the end of the eighteenth century iron-mills and porcelain-works sprang up, while chocolate, chicory, soda, and sugar-products were made on a large scale. Industries in general were aided by coal, which had come into use at that period.

About 1800 textile manufacture was radically changed by the introduction of new machinery, but the industry long continued to be pursued in the homes of the workers, where only primitive looms were at their disposal. Whole families span and wove from morning till night, only to receive the miserable daily wage of two or three pennies a worker from their employers, the well-to-do middlemen. Sometimes even the poorly paid teachers, or the priests in wretched mountain parishes, were forced to work at the loom to make ends meet.

Schools. The government reformed education, again placing it under the care of the Church. Patriotic Czech priests did valuable pioneer work in this field. Instruction in technical subjects was provided by the three-grade polytechnic schools and the Praha School of Engineering, which in 1806 became a Technical High School (an institution of university rank); here the students learned engineering in all its branches.

Inventions. Joseph Božek (1782—1855) taught at this institution. In 1808 he constructed a steam-engine and a steam-boat, with which he made successful trial trips in 1817. Unfortunately, he found no encouragement or understanding and, disappointed by the lack of appreciation on all sides, he destroyed his work with a hammer.

In 1754 a native of Žamberk, Prokop Diviš, working independently of Benjamin Franklin, who had just made the same invention, constructed a lightning-rod. Joseph Ressel of Chrudim (1793—1859) constructed a ship-screw. The art of reproducing designs by tracing them on stone was first used by Alois Senefelder of Praha (1771—1821). The Veverka cousins at Pardubice invented an improved plough.

Scientific Institutions. The government lacked the funds necessary for supporting the intellectual awakening of its subjects, and had no understanding for the arts and sciences; therefore artistic and scientific institutions in Czech lands sprang up only through the self-sacrificing efforts of interested individuals, noblemen, professors, teachers, intelligent burghers and peasants. Thus in 1796 the Society of Patriotic Friends of Art was established at Praha: this association founded an art-gallery and, in 1799, an art school or academy. In 1810 a musical conservatory, the first institution of its kind in Central Europe, was founded at Praha, while the year 1818 witnessed the founding of the Czech Museum at Praha; somewhat later, the Museum Francisceum was established at Brno. Even in these societies and institutions the stern spirit of police control was uppermost.

Growing National Enthusiasm. The government suffocated each free outburst of Czech feeling; but faithful Czechs did not lose confidence; they trusted in their ability to raise their nation from the dead in spite of the government's disapproval. The direction that had been taken by Dobrovský was followed by Joseph Jungmann (1773—1847), and Pelcl's successor, John Nejedlý (1776—1836), who fanned the flame of patriotism in the hearts of their pupils.

The *revivalists* of the Czech nation put it upon the right road and insured its ultimate victory. When the Czech language was again officially established in the schools, the joy of the patriots was extreme. Jaroslav Puchmayer wrote enthusiastically: "Rejoice with us, dear brothers, Moravians and Slovaks! We'll form a Holy League with you, Silesians and Poles!"

The patriots turned trustingly towards Russia, whence they looked for salvation. They had lost all hope that Austria would ever become a Slavonic state, just to its Slavonic inhabitants. Many lost their faith altogether, and feared that the Bohemian nation

would never come into its own. Dobrovský himself was among these pessimists, for he was tortured by doubts as to the Czech power of resistance against oppression. The younger generation, however, believed firmly that "after a severe winter, the Czech nation will blossom again". The leader of this enthusiastic younger group was the Moravian, Francis Palacký (1798—1876) who, after studying at Bratislava on the Danube, went to Praha as a young man of twenty-five (April, 1823). One day in 1825 it happened that Palacký was present at an assembly of those patriots who were beginning to lose their faith. Dobrovský was also there. The youthful enthusiast, turning towards the venerable scholar, asked him to publish his scientific works in his mother tongue and not in German, "for", cried he with emotion, "if we all did thus (that is, wrote in German), then of course our nation would perish of spiritual hunger; I at least, were I the last of even a gipsy tribe, should do my best to leave in the history of mankind an honourable memorial to my race!"

The pupils of Jungmann caught the contagion of their teacher's spirit, and became ardent patriots. They hailed from various classes of society, being the sons of peasants, craftsmen, teachers, preachers. They were not torn by the doubts of their predecessors. This spirit of patriotism was shared by youth from all parts of the Czech lands — Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia.

Literature. The Chronicle of Dalimil inspired them greatly; and Václav Hanka and Joseph Linda, two members of the younger generation of patriots, produced poetical works by which they exerted a powerful influence on their contemporaries. They secretly wrote the Manuscripts of *Králové Dvůr* and of *Zelená Hora*, which were regarded as Czech poetical gems of the tenth and thirteenth centuries respectively, and were translated into all the Slavonic languages, and into German, English, French, Italian and Hungarian. Although these works were really forgeries, they were considered real relics of bygone ages by two generations. So filled with patriotism and of such real literary merit were they, that they had a good effect not only on young Czech painters, poets, sculptors, and musicians, whom they inspired in their creative work, but also on all the intelligent youth of the country.

The men who revived Czechoslovak literature owed much to England. Indeed, English literature had for centuries past been filtering into the country, and even Langland's "Piers Plowman"

had found an echo in Ackerman of Bohemia; in the late eighteenth century England was regarded by the Czechs as an ideal land of enlightenment and progress, and English literature affected the Czechs deeply. Not only manifold translations of Shakespeare (which are still being made even in our own time) then appeared, but other English dramas were translated as well as Macpherson's *Ossian*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Byron's works, and the thoughts of English philosophers like Locke, Hume, Adam Smith, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer.

The poems of a young Slovak poet, a Protestant priest, John Kollár (1793—1852), appeared in 1821. Later he enlarged this work and published it under the name of *The Daughter of Sláva* ("Slávy Dcera"); Kollár's verses proclaim his love for his country and the Slavs, and the love of man for man. He deplored the fate of those Slavs who had lost their national consciousness in the face of Germanization, and felt that an injustice committed against one nation disgraces the whole of humanity, for he was convinced that the nation which is worthy of freedom respects the freedom of others, while "he who enslaves others is himself a slave". Kollár felt that the Slavs were yet to see their day of glory.

A younger contemporary of Kollár, Francis Ladislav Čelakovský (1799—1852), collected various Slavonic poems, and in their spirit wrote his *Echoes of Czech Songs* and *Echoes of Russian Songs*. Charles Hynek Mácha (1810—1836) produced a beautiful poem of high literary merit, *May*, in which he sang the praises of nature's springtide glory.

The Czech patriots did not wish to be outdone by their more fortunate German rivals, who enjoyed the patronage of the government. The young Bohemian intellectuals wished to make operas known to their fellow-countrymen. Therefore they translated the texts of foreign operas. *Dráteník*, an original Czech opera was composed in 1825 by a young lawyer, Francis Škroup (1801—1862), on the words written by his friend, Joseph Krasoslav Chmelenský. Škroup composed a great deal; among other works, he set to music a play written by Joseph Kajetán Tyl, dealing with the life of master shoemakers in old Praha. This popular light opera, first produced in 1834, contained the famous song, *Kde domov můj*, ("Where is my home?"); the song became the Czech national anthem and brought comfort to the people in times of anguish, and expressed their joy in times of happiness.

Bohemia and Slovakia. The language spoken in Bohemia until the fourteenth, and even as late as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was Old Bohemian. This speech was more allied to the speech of the Slovaks than is modern Czech. Since the dialect of Praha, which Hus made the basis for literary Czech, was too far removed from the Slovaks, all the sound changes that the Czech language underwent were not accepted in Slovakia. While the Slovaks learned to use the literary New Czech in their writings, the differences in the spoken speech of the two lands continued to increase. Enemies made the most of it, for they saw that if the kindred Slav lands were divided, control over them would be easier. Since Moravia had been almost entirely Romanized in the period following the Battle of the White Hill, the enemies of Slav unity emphasized the heresy of the Czechs, and wished to make the Moravians feel that theirs was a nationality and language distinct from the Czech: in other words, they worked for the separation of Moravia and Bohemia on the one hand, and of Bohemia and Slovakia on the other.

In Hungary, the official language until Joseph II's time had been Latin. This Emperor's desire to have the whole Empire speak only one tongue brought the German language into that country also, and caused objections to arise there, as well as in Bohemia. From the year 1791 calls for the Hungarian language in schools and offices became more and more urgent. The majority of the inhabitants of Hungary were, however, non-Magyars; they were Slovaks, Ruthenians, Serbians, Croatians, and Roumanians; all these peoples were to accept the language of the aggressive Magyar minority.

Meanwhile in Slovakia, a Roman priest, Anthony Bernolák (1762—1813) wished to establish a new literary Slovak language, in which he was to speak to his Catholic flock, protecting them from the tongue of the heretical Czechs. Bernolák's efforts, however, soon failed, for Slovak patriots realized their near kinship to the Czechs. The bearers of the ideas of nationalism and unity, in Slovakia as well as in Bohemia, were chiefly students. Many of the Slovak enthusiasts later became well known as authors: Samo Tomášik, composer of the songs "*Hej Slované*", Ludevit Štúr, and Joseph Miloslav Hurban are among the most celebrated. All agreed on the necessity of a literary language closely allied to that of the Czechs, Moravians, and Silesians, for though they were convinced of the worth of their own authors, they felt that the

heritage of Hus, Veleslavín, Komenský, and Dobrovský was also theirs.

In 1844 a radical change occurred: Štúr, after long deliberation, decided that the Slovaks ought to give up their age-long literary dependence on Bohemia. Therefore he adapted the popular spoken language of Slovakia to literary uses. He hoped thus to awaken the Slovak masses to a national patriotism, and to bring about a new unity between Slovak Protestants and Catholics; and by proving that the Slovaks had their own literary language, Štúr aimed to secure recognition for Slovak speech in schools. Bohemians, Moravians, and even many Slovaks were sorry that the break had occurred and considered it a national catastrophe.

Science. Pupils of Dobrovský and Jungmann achieved success in science as well as in literature. Thus John Svatopluk Presl (1791—1849) devoted his life to the pursuit of natural science, while John E. Purkyně (1787—1869) gained fame in natural science and medicine.

History as a science made great progress under Paul Joseph Šafařík and Francis Palacký. *Paul Joseph Šafařík* (1795—1861), the son of a Slovak Protestant parson, was a man of sterling character. He came to Praha from Hungary, where both social and material conditions had become unbearable. Praha was then the centre of Slavonic agitation. Šafařík, filled with devotion for the Slavonic idea, studied Slav languages and literatures zealously. He sought to prove that even before the beginning of the Christian era, the Slavs had lived in Europe on the vast stretch of land between the Baltic, the Adriatic, and the Black Seas, and between the Vistula and the Don Rivers; he wished to show that they had settled in Europe at the same period as had the Latins and the Teutons, whose equals they were in all respects. Šafařík put forth his conclusive arguments in *Slavonic Antiquities*, which he published in 1837; with this work he prepared the ground for Francis Palacký, the author of *The History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia*.

Palacký was soon firmly established at Praha, and so far gained the confidence of his countrymen that in 1827 he became the editor of the Museum magazine, an important scientific publication. Due to his efforts, an association, the *Matice Česká*, was founded in 1831, whose aim was to facilitate the publication of scholarly works in the Czech language. All his life, Palacký was inspired with one ideal: to "serve his beloved nation by presenting a true

picture of its past, in which it would find itself reflected as in a mirror, and would become aware of its tasks".

He devoted himself to the study of Czech history before 1526. The first part of his extensive work appeared in 1836, and at once voices wishing to suppress it made themselves heard, for they feared that he was awakening to new life the Czech spirit and stirring up old hatreds against the Habsburgs. Even in this first volume Palacký was forced to submit to Austrian censorship, and often to evade or conceal the truth. His monumental *History* is the result of half a century of tireless labour, and will never lose its great significance. Palacký realized his ideal, he accomplished his aim: his work truly helped the Czech nation "to know itself and to realize what it is and what it ought to be".

Little by little, even the citizen class was gained for the national idea, thanks to the efforts of the younger generation. The young people took part in Sunday excursions, at which folk and patriotic songs were sung; girls and boys enthusiastically recited the nationalistic, progressive pieces by Klicper and Tyl; another popular author of poems suitable for recitation was Francis Jarmor *Rubeš*, a young lawyer (1814—1853), whose poem, *I am a Czech* was a great favourite. Boleslav *Jablonský-Tupý* (1813—1881) deplored the passing of Czech glory and encouraged its return in his poem *Three Ages of the Czech Nation* which had a powerful effect on the youth of the land. He wrote:

"Lo! The Lord's Angel calls 'Arise! Arise from your tombs!', his trumpet sounds. Let there be light in all church towers! Pass, O nation, to thy resurrection!

"Come, rise up all, who still are sleeping! The dayspring is at hand; the morning star shines in the east; nightingales sing; O why do you loiter? Shame on him, who'd be the last!"

The Czech Lands under Ferdinand V.

Ferdinand V (1835—1848). Francis II was succeeded by his son, Ferdinand V, the last crowned King of Bohemia. The new outburst of national life, so apparent in Ferdinand's time, met with no response from the Czech nobility. The nobles of Bohemia had neither Czech nor German national consciousness, but were aware of their class individuality, of their privileged position in the land, above all else. They were concerned chiefly with preserving the rights

of their Estate, but were not very successful. Therefore they were dissatisfied with Ferdinand's government.

Peasants and industrial workers were not satisfied either. A great many workers were employed in textile factories, and their situation was growing steadily more difficult, as machinery was being introduced more and more. A climax was reached in 1843, when revolt broke out among them. The labourers who worked by hand could not compete with the newly introduced machinery, and lost their means of subsistence. The unemployed foolishly wished to stop the march of progress by bursting into the factories and destroying the expensive machines. The workers employed in building the new railroad from Praha to Vienna wished to join the violent mob; on their way to the city, they were met by the government troops: a massacre resulted. Conditions were made even worse by anti-Jewish storms. Quiet was restored but slowly.

A seeming calmness prevailed for a few years following these outbursts; then, in 1848, a new wave of unrest swept the country; no large agitation broke out, thanks to the activity of Dr Francis Cyril Kampelík (1805—1872), a physician, the leading force of Praha's patriotic centre, the *Měšťanská Beseda* (Citizens' Club), founded in 1846. Kampelík was well liked in labour circles, and forestalled impending violence by giving work to the unemployed. He hoped that he would be able to establish national factories, in which the workers would be rewarded according to their ability, and would share the fruits of their labours.

These labour troubles did not interfere with a favourable growth of national enthusiasm, which went hand in hand with the movement towards democracy, the call for the general recognition of the inherent, universal rights of mankind.

CHAPTER IX.

The Dawn of the Modern Era.

The Year 1848.

The European Situation. The discontent of the people in all the states of Europe was growing. Metternich and other reactionary statesmen could temporarily and on the surface suppress modern ideas, but they could not definitely put a stop to the natural progress which had been put in motion by the French Revolution and the industrial upheaval caused by the invention of machinery, the use of coal and steam in industry, and the growth of industrial cities.

The year 1848 witnessed the Chartist Movement (a labour uprising with demands for political progress in England, and overthrow of the government in France, patriotic agitation in Germany, and nationalistic uprisings in Italy. In the Empire where the control of the reactionary Metternich was most felt and hardest to bear, in the Austrian monarchy, upheavals were naturally the order of the day. Austria proper, Hungary, and Bohemia, all were the scenes of violent events.

The Situation in Bohemia. In spite of the stern censorship that Metternich's system imposed upon Bohemia, much revolutionary material escaped the spying eyes of the police; it was impossible to confiscate all papers, pamphlets, and books coming to Bohemia from other countries in great numbers. These works influenced the Germans in Bohemia no less than the Czech patriots, for among them too were progressive and democratically inclined, liberal groups. The Germans and Czechs in Bohemia at this period lived side by side in friendship and agreement, both influenced by the world-force of liberalism. As one German expressed it, they were so close to each other, that they reacted "as one body".

The Czechs paid a great deal of attention to foreign events: they naturally followed with interest the outbreak of a revolution

in France in 1848, which swept away the French monarchy of King Louis-Phillipe and established a republic; they were absorbed in the news of the revolution in Italy, which in the spring of 1848 seriously threatened Austrian control there, and in the convocation of a Parliament at Frankfurt on the Main, an action that had been insisted on by the German states. The Austrians themselves gave Metternich the nickname of Mitternacht, meaning *midnight, darkness*, which showed his unpopularity even at home. The appellation alluded to his conservatism, his support of reaction. On March 11, 1848, the citizens of Praha met to discuss the events that were happening in the world. The meeting was held under the supervision of the police. The chief demands of the patriots were there formulated. They desired: 1. that the lands belonging to the Bohemian crown (that is, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) should have a joint diet, at which all classes, including the peasants, should be represented by elected delegates; 2. equality for citizens, and equal rights for the Czech and the German languages in school and office; 3. abolition of *robota*, forced peasant labour. Gradually these demands, which expressed the views of Palacký, of the lawyer, Dr Francis August Brauner, and of the fiery young orator, Dr Francis Ladislav Rieger, began to prevail at Praha.

The Czech agitation was encouraged by the bloody revolution at Vienna, where the progressives brought such pressure to bear on the Emperor that he dismissed Metternich. Praha rejoiced. New enthusiasm was created by the news that the Emperor had granted a Constitution to his subjects, according to which deputies elected by the people should help him make the laws; the city was further gladdened by the news that censorship had fallen, that the freedom of the press had been proclaimed. Praha celebrated these events by great torchlight processions, in which students, petty artisans, factory labourers, both men and women, took part. At first the people did not realize what was happening; they failed to understand the meaning of liberty, which they mistook for anarchy. It became necessary, therefore, to calm the masses, in order that bloodshed and violence might be prevented. The press sought to soothe and to explain. Especially Charles Havlíček, editor of the *Praha News* and later of the *National News*, performed valuable services in this direction.

On April 8, 1848, the Emperor met most of the Czech demands, and a few days later he promulgated a temporary Constitution,

according to which elections were to be called in the near future. Representatives to the diets of the various lands and to the Diet of the Empire were to be elected. The Diet of the Empire was to assemble at Vienna and work out a new Constitution. Elections for the German Parliament at Frankfurt were also to be held. This body was to make the Constitution for the states in the German league. The Czech and Alpine lands were to be represented both at Vienna and at Frankfurt. The Germans, filled with pan-Germanic ideals, dreamed of a great united German Empire.

The elections to Frankfurt divided the Czechs and the Germans in Bohemia, for the Czechs refused to send their men to the German body; their refusal was in accordance with the precepts of Palacký and Havlíček. Palacký, invited to Frankfurt, refused the invitation in an open, manly way. He believed that the Austrian monarchy was necessary for the Slavs and for the whole of Europe. Havlíček's witty rhymes, aimed against Frankfurt, were heard in town and country.

Everywhere old bonds were being loosened and were giving way. The nations that composed the Austrian monarchy underwent a political awakening and claimed their rights. The Hungarians were the most resolute: the panic-stricken government granted them their own responsible ministry; Louis Kossuth, by birth a Slovak, became its leading spirit. By this action, Austria recognized Hungarian independence, and Hungary was held to the rest of the Empire only by the person of their joint ruler, the Emperor Ferdinand.

The Slovaks, meanwhile, were not idle. In May, 1848, a convention was held in the town of Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš, and Slovak demands were formulated. On the whole, the Slovaks had the same desires as had the Czechs. The Hungarians, however, did not intend to deal with the Slovaks, the Serbians, Croatians, and Roumanians; the Hungarian diet proclaimed at the very beginning that only those who mastered the Magyar tongue would have the right to vote.

The Slav Congress. The Slavonic nations saw that the decisive moment had come. Praha considered the calling of a Pan-Slav Congress to balance the Pan-German Parliament of Frankfurt. Owing to the objections of some of the Czech noblemen, the idea was abandoned, but a Congress of all the Slav nations in the Empire was convened to meet in Praha on June 2, 1848. Many delegates

were sent to the Slav Congress, which opened with pomp and enthusiasm. Poles, Slovenes, Serbians, Croats and Ruthenians came. The meetings were held on the island of Žofín. The outstanding Slovaks, Štúr, Joseph M. Hurban, and Michal M. Hodža, took part: these men had come to Praha, fleeing before Magyar persecution. Of all the speeches that were made, the words of Šafařík made the profoundest impression. His imposing figure, his sparkling eyes, and the fire of his words held his audience spell-bound. He proved to his listeners that "from slavery there is no road to freedom except by battle", and proclaimed that ahead of them stood "either victory and the freedom of the nation", or "an honourable death and after death, glory". To him "a moral death" was the worst death, a "moral life – the highest life". Hardly had Šafařík finished, when the assembly burst into loud rejoicing; the temperamental Yugoslavs unsheathed their swords; some wept, others embraced each other. The Slav Congress, in a beautiful proclamation or manifesto, called for justice towards the Slav nations, and expressed its hopes for the calling of a universal European convention "in the name of the liberty, equality, and fraternity of all nations..."

The Whitsun Storms. The activity of the Slav Congress was brought to a sudden conclusion by the revolutionary storms that broke out in the city at Whitsuntide. The court at Vienna lived in constant dread of revolution. In its midst were many conservatives, who wanted to revive the same conditions as had existed before, and were only awaiting a favourable opportunity for revoking the liberties that the Emperor had so recently granted to his people. This opportunity soon presented itself. On Whitsunday, June 12, High Mass was celebrated on Václavské Náměstí, attended by many people: students, labourers, citizens, men, women, and children. After the service, as the crowds were dispersing to their homes, the students became involved in a little skirmish with the soldiers, during the course of which shots were fired. The people were panic-stricken; nobody knew exactly what was happening; the cry for barricades was suddenly heard throughout the city, and the foolish mob obeyed blindly. The streets were soon blocked up with stones, chairs, benches, tables, anything and everything that the people could lay hands on. Excited citizens, artisans, students, and factory-workers defended their position bravely. The struggle lasted for several days, but the outcome was inevitable; popular resistance

was crushed by Prince Alfred Windischgrätz, who led the imperial army.

The Results. The effects of these Whitsuntide episodes were wide-spread. The provincial diet, whose members had just been elected, was abolished. Praha was placed under martial law, the homes of suspected persons were searched and a commission was established to try the culprits. Havlíček and Brauner were arrested and imprisoned; even the stern reactionary Austrian forces who had gained control of the situation, did not, however, dare to lay hands on Palacký and Šafařík. The arrested students had the heaviest burden to bear, for long imprisonment or military service awaited them.

Elections to the Imperial Diet at Vienna had taken place at the same time as had the elections to the abolished provincial Diet. The Imperial Diet met at Vienna in July, 1848. Palacký, Rieger, Brauner, Dr Anthony Štrobach (Mayor of Praha), and Havlíček (who had been chosen by five electoral districts at once) were among those present. The Diet did not, however, accomplish much. Its chief work was the legal abolition of *robota*, serf labour, on September 7, 1848; thus the difference between serf and lord was removed. The peasants became full owners of their land, which, until his time, had really been only loaned to them in the eyes of the law. At the same time they were rid of all the taxes, including Church tithes, to their late overlords for a comparatively insignificant payment.

Czech Lands under Francis Joseph.

Francis Joseph (1848—1916). Further storms broke out at Vienna in 1848, so that the Diet was forced to retire to Kroměříž in Moravia. The Emperor took up his residence at Olomouc, where on December 2, 1848, he abdicated in favour of his nephew, Francis Joseph. The new ruler was an inexperienced and ill-trained youth of eighteen.

The Revolution in Hungary. The situation in Hungary was serious. The Hungarian element, led by Leo Košut (Kossuth), wished to overrule completely the non-Magyar nations in the land. Therefore the Hungarians soon became involved in a struggle with these nations: at first the Serbians of Hungary claimed their rights; their example was followed by the Croats under the leadership of Joseph Jelačić (Jellachich); next the Slovaks began to press

their claims. Kossuth invited them to fight for their demands. The Slovaks therefore organized their own troops, and fought by the side of Jelačić's men and the imperial army against their Magyar oppressors. The suffering undergone by the Slovaks at this period was extreme: many men were tortured and hanged, women and children shot; each village had its own gallows, called "the trees of liberty" by the domineering Magyars, while the Slovaks called them "Kossuth's trees". They fought the Magyars bravely and desperately. Patriotic songs served to encourage them in their struggle. Especially powerful was the Slovak *Marseillaise*, *Nad Tatrou se blýská* ("Over the Tatra it lightens"), springing from the heart of the ardent Janko Matúška of Orava. The song has become the Czechoslovak national anthem: "Still the pines are growing on the hills of Kriváň! Let him who feels himself a Slovak grasp the sword beside him, Join us in our struggle!" ...

The Hungarian opposition to Austria was broken only by the aid of Russian arms, on August 13, 1849, at Világoš. The instigators of the revolution, including Kossuth, succeeded in escaping from the country before they could be taken; those of them who fell into the hands of the imperial army were punished without mercy. Although the Slovaks had given Austria very real aid in the final defeat of the Magyars, they were rewarded but poorly. The Czech language was taught in Slovak secondary schools for a time, but German, which replaced Hungarian, soon forced it out.

Austria crushed not only the uprising in Praha and the revolution in Hungary, but also the rebellion in Italy, where in 1848 the nationalist forces suffered defeat at the hands of the Austrian forces under the aged marshal, Radecký.

Havliček (1821—1856). Absolutism returned at the very beginning of the new Emperor's reign. The new leader of the reaction was Alexander Bach. Times of trial for the Czechs were again at hand. The national spirits were kept up only by hopes of a better future. Chief among those who encouraged the Czech public in these difficult days was the fearless Charles Havlíček (called Borovský). The editorials of this friend of the people were filled with stern criticism of Czech public life, and with the desire to make it better. Again and again he reminded the Czechs of their need for education. He recommended modest, indefatigable labour, expressing itself in the founding of libraries, of readers' clubs, of endowments for the national cause; he wished to convince the people of the importance of improving agriculture; he emphasized the spiritual kinship of

the Czechs with the South Slavs; he encouraged students to learn foreign languages; he advised his readers to seek out those pages in their history books which recount the brave deeds of their ancestors, to take heart therefrom, and prepare themselves for like deeds. Havlíček represented all that is best in the Czech character: he was a man of vision, and had a strong will, a sterling character, and a keen sense of humour. He never knew fear, and his patriotism was overwhelming.

Havlíček's firmness made him an inconvenient foe to the forces of reaction. Therefore the government tried to silence him by confiscating his publications and hailing him to court. The courts, however, freed him. The government resorted to violence. In December, 1851, Havlíček was arrested at Německý Brod and taken to the prison at Brixen in the Tyrol, and there the intrepid advocate of Czech rights remained for almost three and a half years. There he relieved his feelings by writing small, sharp verses, called *Epigrams*; he described his involuntary departure from Bohemia in the *Tyrolese Elegies*, and revealed Austrian conditions in *The Christening of St Vladimír*. Only when his health had been broken was he permitted to return home, where he died soon afterwards, in 1856. To the very end he was true to his motto: "Promise, command, menace all you will, I shall never commit treason. My colours are white and red, my heritage honesty and strength".

Bach's Absolutism. The government under the leadership of Bach made far-reaching changes in the constitution; it acted altogether without consulting representatives of the people. New imperial royal (generally abbreviated "c. k.", i. e. "císařské královské") political offices for the lands and their subservient districts were introduced; the jury-system was established in the courts; financial administration was reformed; the six-year course in the *gymnasia* or secondary schools was extended to eight years. In 1855, the government made an agreement, the Concordat, with the Pope, by the terms of which public schools were formally placed under the supervision of the Church.

Financial Difficulties of the Government. The government was a poor financial manager. Taxes became heavier and heavier, until the burden became well-nigh unbearable. Finally even the private estates of the Emperor were sold and paper money was printed in great quantities. Metals flowed out of the country, so that a silver twenty-penny piece was saved as a rarity. Matters reached such

a pass that paper bills were actually cut into two or even four pieces, which were then accepted as change. The State involved itself in debt not only by its economic inefficiency, but also by its costly wars. In 1848—49 the suppression of revolutionary movements in Italy and in Hungary had proved expensive ventures. Although in the Crimean War (1853—1856), Austria remained neutral and calmly allowed France and England to defeat Russia, who had so recently helped her to conquer Hungary — a show of ingratitude that Russia neither forgot nor forgave — the Habsburg monarchy soon had to face war again, this time in Italy. The Italian cause was supported by French aid, and Austria was unable to withstand the combined attack of the ardent Italian nationalists and their French allies. The Emperor's forces were defeated and Austria lost control of Northern Italy with the exception of Venetia (Venice).

Absolutism silenced public life. Every movement of the Czech people was under the eyes of the police, which had been re-organized to function more efficiently. Spies were everywhere. Before long the whole Czech land became "a stronghold and a prison". Again the spirit of Germanization was felt: the Czech language, which had been introduced into secondary schools at least in some subjects, was again removed, and some schoolmasters whose activity seemed dangerous to the government, were either sent elsewhere or dismissed. The fate of the *Společnost musejní* and of the patriotic organization *Matice česká*, seemed to be sealed. The police commissioner at Praha rubbed his hands with glee at the anticipation that "within six years, not even a cock to crow forth the praises of Czech literature shall remain".

Although the growing plant of Czech nationalism seemed to be blighted at the roots, the people did not lose faith. They believed that they would survive those who were digging the graves of Czech nationalism, since they had withstood similar difficulties for a thousand years. Slovak public life, too, resembled a cemetery: sighs, sobs, and dead silence. The people again sought relief in song, and found it especially in the harmless and innocent verses of the *Kytice* ("Bunch of flowers") by Charles Jaromír Erben (1811—1870), whose version of the words of the prophetess Libuše gave comfort: "Fires I see and the bloodiest battles. The sharpest of swords will pierce thee; I see thy misery, grief wilt thou suffer. But lose not thou faith, my nation!"

Beginnings of Constitutional Life in Austria.

Economic Conditions. In spite of all difficulties, economic life in our country developed favourably. Especially the beet-sugar and alcohol industries and textile manufactures flourished. The economic life of poorer individuals, of peasants and factory-workers, officials and townsfolk, was deplorable.

The October Proclamation. The Emperor, anxious to preserve the State from the economic destruction that threatened it after the disastrous war with Italy, and wishing to keep power in his own hands, dismissed Bach's ministry; on October 20, 1860, he issued the so-called October Diploma (Proclamation), in which he promised to give up his personal rule, that is, his absolutism, and again to rule constitutionally, that is, with the advice of representatives of the people, who should meet in a new Diet at Vienna. In his proclamation the Emperor guaranteed to treat with consideration the historical rights of the individual kingdoms and lands of his Empire, as well as to respect national equality.

Social Life in Bohemia. The Czech nation greeted the Emperor's Proclamation with great rejoicing. Social life quickly revived. Choirs and singing societies soon sprang up in town and country alike, and expressed their patriotism with "song for the heart, and heart for the nation". Physical education was reorganized in a new spirit, under the leadership of Dr Miroslav Tyrš (1832—1884) who, together with Henry Fügner (1822—1865), founded the athletic society called *Sokol* (Falcon). Tyrš wished to develop not only the body but also the mind, so that the old Greek ideal of *a sound mind in a sound body* should be the possession of the youth of our land.

Social Life in Moravia. In Moravia, meanwhile, the national spirit lay dormant. Newspapers did their good work there, too, but in a far smaller degree than in Bohemia, for many publications consistently refused to keep pace with progress. Even more difficult was the task of awakening nationality in Silesia.

Conditions in Slovakia. Slovak people assembled in 1861 in Turčanský Sv. Martin, where Slovak demands were formulated. The great Slovak patriot, Stephen Moyzes (1797—1869) took them direct to the Emperor. It seemed that the dreams of the Slovaks were about to come true. The joint action of Catholic and Protestant Slovak gained for them three higher institutions of learning, while the Slovak language was to be used at the Gymnasium at Brati-

slava as well. The *Matice slovenská*, a patriotic club, was founded in 1863 to withstand the pressure of Hungary. Its task was to support Slovak literature and art, edit books, give prizes for original Slovak literary works, found libraries, and collect Slovak antiquities. Its centre was the town of Svatý Martin, where a museum was also founded.

The New Constitution. The October Proclamation did not live up to its promises. The constitution, promulgated by the Emperor in 1861, disappointed the Czechs. They observed with sorrow that the Germans would continue to have the upper hand in the Austrian monarchy. Some of the Czech delegates in their disgust did not even wish to attend the diet at Vienna; but they went, in order to oblige the Czech nobility, who sought to gain a confirmation of the historic rights of Bohemia that the new constitution had not recognized. The Czech citizens' delegates thus took up the noblemen's call for state rights. They demanded that the ancient unit of the lands of the Bohemian crown should be recognized as indivisible; that the Emperor should go through with the coronation ceremony and rule over Bohemia as constitutional King, aided by the diet of the land. The Liberals sought to gain the same rights for the Czech language as those enjoyed by the German. They still held Palacký's point of view, that the preservation of Austria was a necessity, but they desired justice for all: they wished for an Austria in which the historical and national units that composed it, (that is, the Czech, the Alpine, and the Hungarian lands) should exist side by side as autonomic states within a decentralized Empire. The groups favouring this arrangement called themselves the Federalists. Against them stood the Centralists, who wished to see all parts of the Empire form a closely-knit unit, governed and administered from Vienna.

The Czechs defended their stand in the Diet at Vienna. The Hungarians did not send their representatives to Vienna; they directed their energies towards freeing themselves from Austria, with which only the person of the joint monarch bound them. The Czechs objected to this proposed division of the Empire, for they grasped its significance: such a dualism would serve to split and thus to weaken the Slavs: the Germans would then easily gain the upper hand on the one side and the Magyars on the other, whilst the Slavs would be ground down between these two mill-stones.

The Bohemians at the Diet soon observed that their demands were misunderstood and their sincere wish to preserve the monarchy scorned. Therefore all but three of them left Vienna. The Moravians followed suit only later. The government rejoiced that the Czechs were not united as to their course of action, and the departure of the Czechs from the government served to make the Bohemian situation more difficult. Unfortunately in 1863 the Czechs divided into two camps: Old Czechs and Young Czechs (Staročechi a Mladočechi); soon afterwards these split further into several petty parties and factions.

In 1865 Palacký published *The Idea of the Austrian State*, a series of essays that attracted wide-spread attention. He pointed out that if the Austrian monarchy oppressed the Slavs, it would bring about its own downfall. If Austria were to perish, said Palacký — and his voice was prophetic — “we Slavs shall be sincerely sorry, but unafraid. We were before Austria, and we shall be after it”.

Prussia and Austria. While Austrian behaviour towards non-German nations caused the government to be unpopular within the Empire, Austria brought upon herself the wrath of a dangerous foreign enemy, Prussia. Rivalry between Prussia and Austria had long been growing, for Prussia, whose political and economic significance was increasing by leaps and bounds, wished to take over from Austria the leadership of the German states. Although in 1864 Austria and Prussia took joint action against Denmark in behalf of Schleswig and Holstein, two principalities in the north of Germany, harmony between the two Powers did not last long. The Schleswig-Holstein question led to disagreement between them and at the end of June, 1866, war between the two rivals broke out.

The war was short but bloody. Austria was favoured by the greatest of the German states, but only Saxony gave it real support. Prussia found little aid in Germany, but was very greatly helped by Italy, which longed to wipe out the last vestiges of Austrian control in the Italian peninsula. War on two fronts, against Prussia and against Italy, weakened Austria. The Prussian forces, faced by no resistance on the boundaries, penetrated into Bohemia near Náchod. After a few petty encounters, the decisive battle of the war was fought on July 3, at Sadová, near Hradec Králové. The Prussians, superior in leadership and equipment, won, causing the Austrian forces under Benedek to flee in confusion. With striking speed the Prussians invaded Praha; knowing of Czech bitterness

towards Austria, they tried to persuade the population to declare for the Prussian King. The Czechs, however, did not allow themselves to be overcome by Prussia's propaganda and tempting promises.

In August, 1866, peace was made. Austria promised to pay an indemnity of twenty million "tollars", and to step out of the German league, thus severing the thousand-year-old unity of the Bohemian lands and Germany.

The Czech Constitutional Struggle.

The Dual Monarchy. A year after the war with Prussia, the Emperor fulfilled his promise to Hungary, doing all in his power to satisfy that country: in 1867, the Austrian statesmen made a settlement (*Ausgleich*) with the Magyars, whereby the whole Empire was divided into two parts: the kingdoms and lands represented at Vienna, and the Hungarian lands (Hungary, Transylvania and Croatia-Slavonia). Each of the two parts was to see to its own administration. The four connecting ties were to be: 1. The person of the Emperor; 2. One foreign policy; 3. Joint finance; 4. A joint army. The Austrian part of the Empire was, however, to contribute far greater sums towards the joint expenditure. The Empire thus became a dual monarchy known as Austria-Hungary; and the Hungarians thus reached a state of practical independence.

The December Constitution. Soon afterwards, in December, 1867 the Council of the Empire at Vienna — with the exception of the Czech delegates — approved of a new Constitution, called the December Constitution after the month of its origin.

It recognized the fundamental rights of all the citizens of the Empire: the right of the individual to choose his own occupation, to study, freely to practise his religion, to move from place to place at will; the right of citizens to band together freely; freedom of speech and of the press. Unfortunately, most of these rights were a dead letter. The new Constitution limited the functions of the land diets, and even in these the government knew how to gain a German majority.

The Czechs objected to the Constitution definitely and energetically, even before its acceptance, while it was still under consideration. The foremost politicians of Bohemia went to Vienna that very year, 1867, and were joined there by Palacký and Rieger, who had visited the exhibition at Paris.

Czechs and Russians. Meantime an ethnographical exhibition was held at Moscow. Representatives of all the Slav nations gathered

there in great numbers with much pomp to take part in the ceremonies, and to show that a Slav nation is not isolated. The ruling classes of Russia favoured Slavonic unity, but they wished to see the others accept Russian Orthodox Christianity and the Russian azbuka. Although the Czechs did not meet these demands, a new Czech-Russian friendship was established; for a time at least the Czechs became devoted Russophiles: they sang and played Russian songs, loved and admired everything Russian.

Praha and Vienna. The government wanted the Czechs to be represented in the Council at Vienna and when they stubbornly refused it, decided to coerce them. They did not give in. Meetings were held in Bohemia in the open, in various districts, at which the speakers tried to harden the people in their resistance to Vienna. The Czech newspapers wrote sharply against the government, which ordered the meetings to be dispersed by the police, their leaders arrested and imprisoned, their papers confiscated, and their editors fined and imprisoned. Still the Czechs did not give in.

In August, 1867, the Czech crown jewels, which during the Austro-Prussian war had been taken to Vienna for safe-keeping, were brought back to Bohemia. The matter was to have been kept a secret to prevent showy demonstrations. The people, however, found out about it in time, and those crown jewels, the symbols of Czech independence, were greeted with great rejoicing; as lights and fires burned, and the sounds of music and bells resounded along the route, the jewels made their triumphant way to Praha.

Founding of the National Theatre. The Czechs lifted their heads proudly against Austrian oppression in May, 1868, at the ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone of the National Theatre. The foundation of this building was made of stones coming from various hills in Bohemia and Moravia. Slovakia could not be considered, as it belonged to the other part of the Empire, where new days of suffering had dawned for it under the new government.

Praha was filled with guests who had come for the celebration. A splendid procession made its way from Karlin through the city: peasants in their many-coloured national costumes, the Sokols, glee clubs, students, craftsmen in historical dress, factory-workers and miners in their Sunday best, led by brass-bands marched through the streets, enthusiastic and rejoicing.

Representatives of practically all the Slavonic peoples were present, and greeted with gladness on this great day of their sister nation. The speeches of Palacký and Rieger deeply touched the hearts

of the listeners. The Slovak representative, Hurban, emphasized the unity of the Bohemian and the Slovak nations: "We are yours", he said, "and you are ours, for we are both the Slavs of the Czechoslovak nation". The glory of these celebrations gave the Czechs a legitimate cause for pride, coming as it did less than a quarter of a century after the doom of the Czech nation had been foretold in sinister prophecies. Now the country was seen to be full of life and energy. It had produced noteworthy scientists, its literature and art were full of promise, and its people were enjoying great material prosperity.

The Declaration. The period held political perils for the Czechs. At Vienna laws were made for them without their participation. In the Land Diet, they were in the minority and, as a result, powerless. Therefore the Czech deputies in this body decided to leave it; before doing so, they published their memorable Declaration or Protest against the December Constitution (August 22, 1868). The Moravian deputies did likewise. The signers of the Declaration lost their political power, and the government did all it could to prevent their re-election. Czech voters, however, remained loyal to their men, and the signers were unanimously re-elected. Hatred of Austria was expressed in noisy meetings. When new storms broke out at Praha, the city was placed under martial law. Protests continued, and neither fines nor imprisonment could intimidate the Czech people.

The Attempt at Constitutional Settlement. Francis Joseph announced his wish to see Czech representatives at Vienna, and to see the end of the persecution. The Czechs were willing to go to Vienna, but only upon the condition that the Emperor recognized the independence of the Bohemian kingdom. The Emperor responded in a ceremonious letter, called the Rescript of September 12, 1871, in which he promised to accede to Czech wishes. The "Fundamental Articles" were agreed on between the Czech Land Diet and the government; these were the conditions upon which the Czech delegates would return to Vienna. The Rescript was welcomed joyously.

Disappointment was soon to follow, for Germans and Hungarians, led by the Premier, Count Julius Andrassy, objected strenuously to the "Fundamentals"; in the face of such powerful opposition these fell. The Czechs made no secret of their sad disillusionment and their grievous displeasure with the German and Hungarian governments, and with the Emperor who had so faith-

lessly broken his promises. The ensuing dissatisfaction of the Bohemians, expressed in speeches and in print, led to new persecution and punishments.

Palacký remained all his life the constant enemy of the existing order. Again and again he showed that both self-reliance and labour were necessary to the Czech cause. When his *History* was completed, in April, 1876, he solemnly declared: "Our nation, surrounded by enemies, is in great danger; I, however, do not give up, but continue to hope that we shall be able to resist them all, if we but wish to do so. It is not enough for a man to say "I wish it", but each of us must work and must sacrifice all that he can for the common good, especially for the preservation of our nationality."

Conditions in Vienna. The Czech nation was strengthened by the struggle. After Palacký's death, Rieger became the leader of the Old Czech party. The new head objected to the foreign policy of the government, when in 1878 it ordered the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a country practically all of whose inhabitants were Serbians. Gradually, however, the opposition to Vienna was giving away, and voices demanding the Czech return to Vienna could be heard. After further negotiations, Czech representatives really went to the Austrian capital to join in the political work of the Empire; they did so only when the government, led by Count Edward Taaffe, had again promised to meet their wishes. The Czechs had to pay for each success with a bitter fight, tedious bargaining, and concessions in the form of votes for government measures.

In 1880 the government recognized the equal rights of the Czech and the German languages in Bohemian offices. For example, if anybody filed a petition to an office in Czech, he would receive an answer in the same language. This had been the practice before, but when it was given the official sanction of the government, the Germans protested. They wished the Czech border-lands to become "closed districts" to Czech officials; Czech minorities were supported by the "Ústřední matice školská" ("The Central Educational Endowment Fund"), a league concerned chiefly with providing educational facilities for children where Czechs were in the minority. This organization found faithful support in the "Severočeská jednota" (the North Bohemian Union) and the "Pošumavská jednota" (the Union of the Šumava, the south-western frontier of Bohemia); similar clubs were founded in Moravia, while the league "Komenský" launched its beneficial activity among the Bohemians of Vienna.

The Czechs who gained a majority in the land diet by the 1883 elections marred the German "closed district" plan; the Germans, in their indignation, left the diet. In Moravia, the German majority in the land diet continued. At Vienna, the government made but unwilling concessions to Czech demands. In 1882 the Czechs had virtually to force the division of the University of Praha into two separate institutions — the Czech and the German ones; until then, the University had been conducted in German and only a few professors and lecturers had taught in Czech.

Vienna had neither understanding for the cultural needs of the Czechs, nor the desire to meet them. It was necessary to fight for each secondary school, for each educational aid. Conditions in Moravia and in Silesia were even worse than in Bohemia. When the cry for a Czech *gymnasium* at Opava, Silesia, was heard, the government refused to sanction this demand, and did not wish to allow even a private Czech secondary school to exist there; it tried to prove that Silesia had no need of it, as the only Czechs living there were artisans and labourers. The activity of the *Ústřední matice* succeeded and the institution was founded in spite of objections.

The Punktace. The long struggle wearied both sides; in 1890 the Old Czech party and the Germans of Bohemia made an agreement as to their respective linguistic rights. This agreement, which is known as the "Punktace", made various concessions to the Germans, and therefore met with an unexpected storm of protest on the part of the Young Czech party. The Young Czechs put up an uncompromising front against the originators of the Punktace; at the new election, the Old Czechs, who had until that time had the majority both at the land diet and among the Czech delegates at Vienna, were defeated in Bohemia and in Moravia; the Young Czechs were victorious, and Czech solidarity was broken.

New Leaders. Two brothers, Julius Grégr (Doctor of Law) and Edward Grégr (Doctor of Medicine), became the new leaders of the nation. The Young Czech party also succeeded in gaining valuable workers from the University: Joseph Kaizl, Professor of Financial Science, and Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, Professor of Philosophy. The young Doctor of Law, Charles Kramář, also gained prominence.

Strained relations between the Czechs and the Germans continued, although conciliatory voices on the Czech side could often be

heard. Certain Czechs saw the necessity of united action between their people and the Germans, at least as regards economic matters. The government at Vienna answered such voices with an ominous silence.

A new wave of national hatred broke in 1897, when the Austrian Premier, Kazimír Badeni, a Pole by birth, published new *linguistic prescriptions* which offered no new concessions to the Czech language, in spite of Czech public opinion. These prescriptions demanded that officials in Bohemia should know and speak both languages, but the law was a dead letter in those districts of Bohemia where the Germans had a majority; there the officials either refused to speak Czech, or did not know how to, and the services of an interpreter were necessary. Negotiations between offices had to be carried on exclusively in German. Even in purely Czech sections of the country railroad officials were punished for speaking Czech among themselves. The situation was even worse in the army, where the Czech language was deliberately made fun of and Czech soldiers were severely punished for using their own mother tongue. A similar situation existed in Hungary, where the Magyar language was predominant.

The Situation of the Slovaks in Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian agreement had sacrificed to Hungary the Slavonic nations living in the country; the Slovaks were naturally among these. In 1868 a new language law was passed in Hungary, making the Magyar language the official tongue of the country. Immediately afterwards, non-Magyar nations living in the land were cruelly persecuted.

The Hungarians realized that if they were to survive, they must assimilate the other nations. Therefore they gathered the children of poor non-Magyar parents, dressed them in uniform clothes, gave each a number, and sent them to Hungarian estates to change their national feeling. There the unfortunate children suffered until they perished, or else returned home ragged and starving. The Magyars also began to close down the Slovak secondary schools, even though the Slovaks had built them at their own expense. The number of Slovak primary schools was reduced. The Magyars used various methods to gain the Slovaks for their cause: they tried promises and threats, gentleness and persecution, imprisonment, flogging. Finally they abolished the *Matice slovenská* and confiscated its possessions. They wished to condemn the Slovaks as such to perpetual silence, considering the Slovak nation far inferior to their own. Finally the Slovak language was even forced out of the Slovak public schools, and there were heavy punishments for each Slovak word uttered in schools. Whoever was caught reading a Slovak book was expelled. At election time, the Magyars did all in their power to prevent the election of Slovak patriots to the

Hungarian diet. The Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, worked hand in hand with the Hungarian nationalists. In spite of all these strenuous efforts to do away with the Slovak national identity, the work progressed but slowly: it seemed to be, as indeed it was, in vain.

Czech Political Parties. Gradually the Young Czech Party ceased to be the chief representatives of Bohemian public opinion; various other parties sprang up and gained influence. In 1897 Ant. Němec founded a newspaper *Právo lidu* ("The Rights of the People"), which became the organ of the Social Democratic Party. The headquarters of this party were at Vienna; after a time, however, the majority of the Social Democrats in Bohemia broke away from Vienna and joined the "Czechoslovak Social Democracy". Since this party gradually drifted away from the nationalistic ideal, the "National Socialist Party" was founded, holding the liberal social and economic views of the Socialists, yet keeping the national goal in mind. Václav Klofáč became this new party's leader, *Česká demokracie* (today *České slovo* — "The Czech Word") its organ. Another Socialist party, that of the Christian Socialists, was founded: its members were gathered from the ranks of the Catholic working classes.

The farmers organized themselves into the Agrarian Party, which today is formally known as "the Republican Party of the Czech Countryside"; the newspaper *Venkov* ("The Countryside") is its official organ. Similarly the merchants and tradespeople formed their own party. Members of various classes, who had in common a sincere devotion to the Church of Rome, formed the so-called Popular Party. Besides all these parties and factions there was the group of Constitutional Progressives, led by A. Hajn, A. Kalina, and K. S. Sokol; the influential Czech Popular Party (later called the Progressives) was founded by Professor Masaryk and from the beginning supported by Dr Přemysl Sálal, the philosopher F. Drtina, and the poet J. S. Machar. Its views were expressed in the newspaper *Čas* ("The Times"), edited by Dr J. Herben.

In Moravia, the Popular Moravian Party, founded by Dr A. Stránský, stood close to the Young Czechs (Freethinkers), and broadcast its ideas in the *Lidové Noviny* ("The Popular News"), published at Brno. In Slovakia there were no parties in the current sense of the word. The patriotic Slovak was conscious only of his nationality, and thus there was only one Slovak party, that of the nationalists.

The non-Socialist parties all defend private property. The Socialist parties, on the other hand, condemn private ownership of factories, machinery, railroads, and mines by wealthy individuals (capitalists); they wish these possessions to be owned and controlled by society as a whole, that is, by the State. They hope for a reorganization of society; they want a society without class privileges, without discrimination in regard to property, religion, or nationality. In this new society, all citizens are to have equal opportunity, and all must work. Socialism teaches that the labour of the working classes has caused the prosperity of the capitalists, who reap the fruit of the poor workers' toil: it wishes to do away with this unjust order of things by means of a social revolution. There are, of course, various degrees and shades of socialism: some socialists are far less radical than others, as to their ultimate goal and the methods by which it is to be achieved. The intellectual father of socialism was Karl Marx (1818—1883), who favoured the liberation of Hungary, but found no sympathy for the rights of the Slavs.

At the time of the beginning of the independent Socialist party of Bohemia, Masaryk published a far-reaching work, *Sociální otázka* ("The Social Question"), in which he analysed the views of Karl Marx, who sought the betterment of only the economic, the material conditions of labour. Masaryk showed that man lives not by bread alone, but needs spiritual food as well. He backed most of the demands of the working man, and in his lectures he awakened the enthusiasm of the poverty-stricken people of the nation, and showed them intellectual light. Masaryk's ideas found a fertile soil in Slovakia, where they were spread by his followers.

The foremost demand of the socialists was universal suffrage. So far, there existed a property qualification for voting. Professor Masaryk was a tireless advocate of the universal right to vote; the cause found an able spokesman in the Austrian Diet in the person of Dr Charles Kramář, the leader of the Young Czechs. In January, 1907, universal suffrage for men became a reality, and soon afterwards elections were held on the basis of the new electoral reforms. All men over twenty-four could vote. The elections brought startling results: the nationalistic parties, especially the Young Czechs, suffered overwhelming defeat, while the Social Democrats and the Agrarians were strengthened. New men entered the battlefield of the Diet at Vienna, while experienced leaders, Masaryk and his follower Drtina (Professor in the Czech University

and defender of human rights), again took their places there. The Czech delegates held their nation's confidence but unfortunately they were unable to put up a solid front.

Annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 1908 Austria-Hungary surprised the world by the sudden annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, lands inhabited by members of the Serbian nation. The hopes of the Serbians for the eventual formation of a united Greater Serbia were thus destroyed. Tension between Serbia and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was the result. The government at Vienna lost no opportunity to weaken this Slavonic state, and diligently searched out supposed plots of the Bosnian Serbs. Professor Masaryk protected the rights of the Serbians and fearlessly uncovered all Austrian schemes against them. Parallel to Austrian activity against the Serbians was that of the Hungarians against the Ruthenians, who were accused by their oppressors of secret negotiations with Tsarist Russia.

The relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia grew even more strained after the Balkan War, which the Christian states of the Balkan peninsula fought against Turkey in 1912 and 1913. Serbia was appreciably strengthened by the struggle. Austria-Hungary was waiting for an opportunity to attack and overcome its dangerous southern neighbour at all costs. Threatening war-clouds began to gather over Europe.

The Arts and the Sciences.

Science. The enemies of the Czechs could no longer scoff at Czech literature and science. The dream of the *revivalists* for a Czech Encyclopedia had long since been fulfilled: the first part, edited by F. L. Rieger, had appeared in 1859, and the first edition of Otto's Encyclopedia "*Ottův slovník naučný*" composed of twenty-eight volumes, was soon completed. John Gebauer and his pupils in their studies of the Czech language and literature were worthy successors of Dobrovský and Jungmann. Professor Ernest Denis (1849—1921) of the University of Paris continued Palacký's work in his great historical treatises *The End of Czech Independence* and *Bohemia after the White Hill*. In his *History of the City of Praha*, Václav Vladivoj Tomek presented a history of Bohemia until 1609. Special studies of the history of the nation have been made by such brilliant followers of Professor Jaroslav Goll as Professors Josef Šusta, Jaroslav Bidlo, Pekař, No-

votný and Šimák. Czech scientists have achieved notable successes in engineering and architecture, while there are successful Czech workers in the fields of Natural History, Medicine and Mathematics. Even courageous explorers and leaders of scientific expeditions have not been lacking among the Czechs (Holub, Vráz, Musil, Daneš).



Fig. 37. A Moravian Slovak from Bilovice (Joseph Mánes).

Literature. The Czech nation can boast of many poets of the first rank: the names of Jaroslav Vrchlický, Jan Neruda, Josef Sládek, Julius Zeyer, Svatopluk Čech, J. S. Machar, Otakar Březina and Antonín Sova are pre-eminent. Historical novels have had a national significance: Josef Svátek, Václav Beneš-Třebízský and especially Alois Jirásek

caused the days of the past to live again in their works, and thus cheered and strengthened their readers and inspired them to action. Various aspects of contemporary life have been masterfully described in the prose works of Čapek-Chod, K. V. Rais, F. Herites, and Josef Holeček, who have acquired for them-



Fig. 38. A Moravian peasant girl from the Haná country (Joseph Mánes).

selves a permanent place in Czech literature. Women have successfully competed with men in literature: Božena Němcová, Karolína Světlá, Eliška Krásnohorská, Tereza Nováková, Božena Viková-Kunětická, Růžena Svobodová, and Gabriella Preissová are the names of some of the most outstanding literary women of Bohemia.

Slovakia which in its times of hardship ever found a firm support in Bohemia, also attracted attention abroad. When in 1907 the oppression of the Slovaks in Hungary reached its height, this long-suffering people drew upon themselves the attention of the great Norwegian poet, Björnstjern Björnson, and of the English historian, R. W. Seton-Watson (Scotus Viator). Denis had already noted the significance of the Slovaks. The Slovak relations with Bohemia exerted a favourable influence not only upon Slovak



Fig. 39. The National Museum, with the statue of St Václav by J. V. Myslbek in the foreground.

economic conditions, but also upon Slovak literature. Poetry of the highest rank was produced by Svetozar Hurban Vajanský, Pavel Országh-Hviezdoslav, Martin Razus, and others. Joseph Škultéty in his monthly journal *Slovenské pohľady* ("Slovak Views"), affected public opinion, as did also the views of Masaryk, disseminated by his Slovak pupils in their country.

The Fine Arts. Czech artists have been equally successful. A new era in Czech painting was opened by Joseph Mánes; Mikuláš Aleš was his follower. Both caught the spirit of Czech national songs, costumes, and buildings in their characteristic works. Ju-

lius Mařák is noted for his landscapes, while Józsa Úprka has brilliantly portrayed Slovak life in all its many-coloured splendour. Brožík is the most celebrated of the painters of historical scenes: his "John Hus before the Council of Constance" and "The Election of George of Poděbrady" adorn the walls of the Old Town Hall of Praha. Luděk Marold and Adolph Kašpar were especially successful in the illustration of books and magazines. Alphonse Mucha has won world-wide recognition for his series of portrayals of significant moments in Slavonic history. Max Švabinský is a master of portrait-painting.

Among the most celebrated names in Czech sculpture are those of Joseph B. Myslbek (who designed the monument of St Václav on the Václavské náměstí), Stanislav Sucharda (Palacký monument) Ladislav Šaloun (Hus monument), F. Bílek, Joseph Mařatka and John Štursa. Czech architecture boasts the names of Joseph Zíték (architect of the National Theatre), Joseph Schulz, (National Museum), Kotěra, and Kamil Hilbert, who had charge of the plans for the completion of St Vitus Cathedral in 1929

Modern Czech art and architecture have found successful expression in the building of churches, theatres, schools, banks and commercial houses, of the Rudolfinum (today the Parliament building) and the Obecní Dům as well, as in the building of bridges, and other works of art. The old and the new in art and architecture have mingled to form an interesting and harmonious whole. The favourable development of art is constantly encouraged by art exhibitions, picture galleries, museums, and the like.

Music. Czech music, perhaps even more than other features of Czech culture, has gained a world-wide renown. Wherever good music is played the names of Bedřich Smetana and Antonín Dvořák are honoured. Smetana's operas (*The Bartered Bride*, *The Brandenburgs in Bohemia*, *Dalibor*, etc.), and symphonies (*Má Vlast* — My Country); Dvořák's *New-World Symphony*, his Slavonic Dances, and his operas (*Rusalka*, *Dimitrij*, etc.) are universally appreciated. Zdeněk Fibich (*Šárka*), Chas. Kovařovič (*Psohlavci*), Vítězslav Novák, J. B. Foerster, and Leoš Janáček (*Jenůfa*) are among the outstanding names in Czech music. Neither has the country been lacking in great artists, such as the violin virtuosos F. Ondříček and Jan Kubelík, and the operatic star Ema Destinová, who have toured the world, as have also the Czech Quartet and the Moravian Teachers' Choir.

The Theatre. Great energy and devotion to the national cause achieved what had long been the ambition of all cultured Czechs; in 1881 the Czech National theatre was completed in spite of Austrian disapproval. The triumph, however, was short-lived, for the structure was destroyed by fire. New self-sacrifice and zeal soon made up for the loss; the theatre was rebuilt and opened in November, 1883, and has ever since been the scene of worthy performances of both domestic and foreign drama.



Fig. 40. The National Theatre.

Education. The development of Czech cultural life was made possible by schools, from the most elementary schools to educational institutions of the highest rank. The number of secondary schools, of girls schools, and of technical schools has increased. These lower technical schools, teaching agriculture and various crafts, and higher technical schools, such as the schools of Mines, have sprung up, while the Universities and the Polytechnics (High Schools of Engineering) have continued to improve.

The effort to equal all other countries in all branches of life and culture was and is apparent in Czech endeavours. In 1890 the philanthropist, Joseph Hlávka, founded the Czech Academy of Science, Literature, and Art. Although the Czechs started somewhat late in the race for modern cultural development, it was clear that they were rapidly catching up. The words of Libuše (in Smetana's opera of the same name) were coming true: "My dear Bohemian nation will not die, but with great glory will survive all ills!"

CHAPTER X.

From Servitude to Liberty.

The Assassination at Sarajevo. On June 28, 1914, the world was shaken by the news that the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, Archduke Francis Ferdinand d'Este, together with his wife had been assassinated at Sarajevo in Bosnia. Ferdinand was the son of the Emperor's brother, Charles Louis, and was the heir-apparent because Francis Joseph's only son, Rudolph, had perished in 1889; his wife had been Countess Sophie Chotek before her marriage. The assassin was a Serbian (Bosnian) student, Gavrilo Princip.

The tragedy took place upon the occasion of large military manoeuvres in Bosnia, at which Ferdinand was to be present. His presence excited the Serbians who hated him as the personification of Austria's rule over Serbian lands (Bosnia-Herzegovina). A rumour was circulated in Bosnia that the Archduke favoured a war against Serbia. According to gossip, Austria had also gained Germany for the cause, since the German Emperor Wilhelm II had visited Ferdinand at the latter's estate at Konopiště near Benešov in Bohemia in May of the same year.

News of the assassination surprised but did not grieve the Czechs, for neither the heir-apparent nor his wife had ever won the love of the people, since they had been self-centred and proud.

European Diplomacy. In 1879, Austria and Germany had formed a defensive alliance, which was later joined by Italy: the league composed by these three Powers was then called the Triple Alliance. France, Russia, and Great Britain, on the other hand, formed the Triple Entente. The relations of each of these nations to the others were constantly fluctuating.

The Entente. Even though they were at peace, the two groups of nations did not trust each other. Especially Germany caused the Entente uneasiness, for she was growing richer and more powerful, and competed with England and France in trade; besides,

German armaments on land and on sea were increasing. The Germans, conscious of their growing strength, became insufferably proud and overbearing: they believed that they could do anything they wished, that might counts for more than right, that they would conquer the world as soon as they rattled their swords.

Germany hoped to reach Asia (where Great Britain and Russia already had their great colonial empires). The most convenient road from Germany to Asia led through the Balkans. There, however, Serbia and Roumania impeded Germany's progress. After the Balkan Wars, Serbia became the most powerful state of the Balkan peninsula, at the same time gaining the enmity of Austria-Hungary and of Germany, who had favoured the Turkish side in these struggles. Austria-Hungary, having lost much of its Balkan trade since the Serbian victory, also disliked seeing the power of the Slavonic Serbia on the increase, and was looking for an occasion to fight and conquer Serbia. This country, meanwhile, drew ever closer to the greatest Slav state, Russia.

The Declarations of War. The assassination of Francis Ferdinand did not pass by without result. Austria plotted her revenge. The government circles favouring war got in touch with Germany. It was decided that Serbia should be punished by war at all costs, even if the war should become a general European struggle. After further consideration, Austria-Hungary presented Serbia with an ultimatum, that is, it laid down conditions which Serbia had to accept if it wished to remain at peace with Austria. The ultimatum was purposely made so humiliating that Serbia could not possibly accept, if it wished to keep the dignity of an independent state. Austria awaited Serbia's reply until six o'clock on July 25. The Serbian answer was at once reasonable and obliging. The small state tried its utmost to meet the Austrian demands. Such an answer, however, did not suit the plans of Berlin and Vienna, and therefore it was declared evasive and insufficient. The two Powers refused the good offices of England and Russia, who took up the Serbian cause and wished to act as mediators in a peaceful settlement of the difficulty. Diplomatic relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were broken off, and partial mobilization was declared by Austria on July 26. When the Russians also began to mobilize, Germany sent Russia an ultimatum, in which she threatened war if Russian mobilization did not cease at once. Russia refused, therefore Germany declared war on Russia on August 1.

On July 31, Francis Joseph declared full mobilization. Italy remained neutral; in vain did the Emperor try to persuade her to join her allies. Austria hesitated to declare war on Russia, doing so only upon the exertion of pressure from Berlin. Francis Joseph did not declare war on France, who rose in defence of Russia, but waited for France to declare war on Austria.

On August 3, Germany declared war on France. Disregarding the fact that the neighbouring Belgium and Luxemburg were neutral, Germany ruthlessly broke the neutrality of these countries by invading them in her attack on France. She defended her disregard of the "scrap of paper" by which she had guaranteed their neutrality by claiming that if she had not invaded these countries first, France would have done so, and thus would have placed her in a difficult strategic position. Britain, indignant at the German violation of Belgian neutrality, declared war on Germany.

Thus the Austrian war of revenge on Serbia grew into a struggle of European proportions within a few short days; a struggle in which the Central Powers faced the Allies, France, Great Britain, and Russia. The Central Powers, that is, Germany and Austria-Hungary, later included Turkey and, after 1915, Bulgaria on their side. On the other hand Italy at this time joined the allied cause, declaring war on Austria-Hungary and, a year later, on Germany. Roumania and Greece also fought for the Allies, as did Portugal; while Spain, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden preserved their neutrality, from which they gathered great benefits.

The Course of the War. The acts of cruelty committed in this war were many and great. Most horrible of all, perhaps, were the poisonous gases used. Inventions for causing suffering knew no bounds; fighting took place on land and on sea, in the air, and under the sea. The fighting spread from Europe to Africa, where the Germans had their colonies, and to Asia, where Palestine, Asia Minor, Persia, and Armenia were at stake. As early as the first year of the war Japan cast in her lot with the Allies to the consternation of the Central Powers. The United States entered the war against Germany in April, 1917, after President Woodrow Wilson had tried in vain to be the peacemaker. Wilson became the protector of all small oppressed nations. He preached the ideal of self-determination: according to Wilson, each nation should have the right to decide its own fate. This message of the American President was greeted with joy by the Czechs.

The Czechs during the War.

The Czechs at Home. Austria-Hungary distrusted the Slavs, and especially the Czechs, from the very beginning of the war. At first she feared that Czech soldiers would refuse to obey the mobilization order. The Czechs obeyed, but did so only unwillingly. They went to the front with their hearts full of hatred for the country they were to fight for. They fought as little as possible and entered the Allies' ranks whenever they could.

The newspaper *Čas* from the beginning warned its readers that the war would last long, that it would bring hardship and excitement, that the side with the most money and the most men would win. It was clear that *Čas* prophesied victory for the Allies. Other journals also were nationalistic in sentiment. Therefore portions were confiscated, until finally the whole journal was ordered to be discontinued. A difficult time of military government and police censorship had descended on the Czechs. The persecution of Czech people began as early as the end of August, 1914, when the proclamation of the Russian commander-in-chief, Nikolai Nikolajevič, appeared in Bohemia. Copies were spread among the students. This was considered treason. Students were arrested, judged, condemned to several years of imprisonment. Some Czechs paid for their sympathies with their lives. Great excitement was caused by the arrest of the delegate, Václav Klofáč, the poets J. S. Machar and Viktor Dyk, and Dr Alice Masaryk, Professor Masaryk's daughter.

The Government Council had not met since the spring of 1914. Czech political parties which had bitterly opposed each other were drawn together by the war. Important Czech questions were debated at the homes of Professor Masaryk, Dr Kramář, and Dr J. Scheiner, (who was at the head of the Sokols). Later the participants of these meetings formed a committee among whose members were to be counted Masaryk's follower, Dr Edward Beneš, Dr Ant. Hajn, Dr Alois Rašín, Gustav Habrman, Dr Přemysl Šámal, and others. Thus the secret Czech society, the *Mafie*, sprang up; it had for its aim the destruction of Austria-Hungary and the establishment of an independent Czechoslovak state. Its members were recruited from all the various political parties of Bohemia. The Czechs followed with anxious gaze the long and exhausting struggle on all fronts: in Russia, France, Serbia, Italy, Roumania;

for whatever the result, the future of the Czech lands was at stake. The Czechs were confident that their cause would win: although they lived through periods of great anxiety and depression, their confidence never wavered: they felt that this time the world would listen to their grievance and see that justice was done them.

Of course, there were people in Bohemia who doubted the triumph of the Czech cause, who placed all their faith in Austria; these people had the press in their hands and thus could easily spread their opinions. The enemies of the Czechs were, in general, pleased with the war. They kept a stern eye on Czech obedience and faithfulness to the Emperor, for whom the Czechs were being forced to sacrifice their "health, blood, and life". All the victories of the Central Powers had to be celebrated in Bohemia at least outwardly; the Czechs had to buy various badges, pictures, and printed material honouring the Austrian cause, and had also to buy Austrian war loans. Orders were given to teachers and professors to examine student libraries and remove from them all books presenting an unfavourable view of Austria's allies. Other books, containing accounts sympathetic to the nations at war with the Central Powers were confiscated. A period of darkness was returning.

The Czechs beyond the Austrian Boundaries. The outbreak of the war found Professor Masaryk in Germany, whence he was planning to go to Paris and London to attempt bringing about a reconciliation between Serbs and Bulgarians. His journey interrupted, he returned home, and informed his friends of Germany's state of preparedness for war. Later he went to neutral Holland to learn of the Allies' intentions. Then he secretly left for Italy. His departure from Bohemia came in the nick of time, for the police were just about to arrest him. Masaryk went to Rome and then made his way to Switzerland, where he was visited by Dr Beneš, who had secretly come from Bohemia for the purpose of establishing direct communications between Masaryk and his friends at home. Others, both men and women, kept these contacts and the cause alive by numerous trips to Switzerland. Great care was necessary to hide from the watchful eyes of the Austrian police the messages that Masaryk was sending home in hollow pencils, pens, umbrellas, or the heels of boots. In September, 1915, Dr Beneš became Masaryk's permanent helpmate. Both received inestimable help from a gifted young Slovak, an outstanding astronomer and

talented aviator of the French service, Dr Milan Rastislav Štefánik, who helped them to make their way to leading allied circles. The number of Masaryk's helpers was on the increase. Czechs wrote for their cause where the Allies could read, in Swiss papers. A Czech paper was founded at Geneva.

From Switzerland Masaryk and Beneš went to Paris, where Ernest Denis, that friend of the Czechs, was editing a French paper,



Fig. 41. Milan Rastislav Štefánik.

The Czech Nation; Denis propagated the Czech cause through this organ, having convinced himself with Masaryk and Kramář that Austria would never do justice to the Slavs. All three aimed at the destruction of Austria and the founding of an independent Czechoslovak state upon its remains. Denis proclaimed this also in his celebrated book called *War*, and in lectures at home and abroad; for example, he spoke at Geneva in favour of the Czechs on July 6, 1915, upon the occasion of the five hundredth anniversary of the burning of Hus. Joseph Dürich, an agrarian delegate, also came to Geneva at this time. Relations with Czech settlers living abroad had already been established. The Czechs in the

United States and in Russia all worked for the oppressed homeland. In Russia, especially tireless in their endeavours were Bohumil Čermák and Bohdan Pavlů, who was editor of the Czech paper in Russia, *The Czechoslovak*.

Masaryk proceeded from France to England, where he worked for Czech liberation in harmony with Seton-Watson and his friends of *The Times*. Masaryk announced Czech demands for an independent state in Seton-Watson's weekly, *The New Europe*. The University of London asked Masaryk to deliver a series of lectures on the Slavs, and he accepted the invitation. While thus occupied, however, he gave his attention to every circumstance by which the cause of the deliverance might be furthered.

In the Service of the National Ideal. At home, activity was just as tireless as abroad, though of course it was carried on in secret. The Czechs were digging the grave of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in unaccustomed accord, not even fully conscious of each other. Suddenly the Czech public was astounded by the news that Kramář and Rašín had been taken to Vienna. Kramář was accused of spreading Pan-Slav ideas and a love for Russia; of aiming at the ruin of the Austro-Hungarian unit by tearing away from it Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and other Slav lands; he was accused of gaining adherents by word and deed. After protracted prosecution, Kramář and Rašín and two others were condemned to death. Only the death of Francis Joseph in November, 1916, prevented the carrying out of this sentence. The new ruler, Charles I, grandson of Charles Louis (the late Emperor's brother), changed this death-sentence to twenty years' imprisonment.

A public proclamation, made on November 1, 1916, announced to the world that the whole Czechoslovak political movement outside the homeland was centred in the *National Czechoslovak Council* (Národní rada československá), led by Masaryk, Štefánik, Beneš (its secretary) and Dürich. Masaryk, working for the liberation of his country, could boast; "We do not beg for political independence, we are building it with our own strength."

Many Czechs living in France, Serbia, England, and Russia — students, craftsmen, merchants, artists — enlisted at the very beginning of the war to struggle against the hated Dual Monarchy. They had first to overcome the distrust that faced them on all sides. They succeeded remarkably well. In Russia, their ranks were joined by Russian prisoners of war who hailed from the Czech

lands. These broadcast the idea of Czech liberation with enthusiasm. The way was being prepared in Russia for the arrival of Professor Masaryk, who was planning to go there. Dürich and Štefánik both went to Russia to support and keep alive the cause of Czech liberation. Soon after their arrival, in March 1917, there was a great revolutionary upheaval in Russia. The ancient form of government, Tsarism, fell; the temporary government which was set up consented to the formation of an independent Czechoslovak army. Professor Masaryk's arrival in Russia aroused the enthusiasm of his compatriots there: his name was well known in Russian circles, for his voluminous work *Russia and Europe* had already attracted wide-spread attention.

The Czechoslovak Legions. The Czechoslovak army won its first success on July 4, 1917, in the celebrated battle of Zborov in Galicia. Great bravery was exhibited by the Czechoslovaks in this battle; the names of the leading officers, Stan. Čechek, John Syrový, Jos. Švec, Otakar Husák and Rudolf Gajda especially stand out. The Germans were pressing on Russia with all their might. Suddenly, anti-militaristic forces gained the upper hand in Russia: the army collapsed. The Germans advanced into the interior of the country: the successes of the Czechoslovak army had been in vain. The moderate temporary government was overthrown, while the extremely radical branch of the Socialists, called the Bolsheviks, seized control. Vladimír Uljanov, called Lenin, and L. Trocky, actually named Bronstein, became the new leaders of Russia. The Bolsheviks, being opposed to war, negotiated a separate peace with Germany in 1918 at Brest-Litevsk.

Masaryk's presence in Russia had a favourable effect. Coming when he was most needed, he strengthened the Czechoslovaks for further fighting against Austria. He said to them: "Believe me, my brothers, it is not so terrible to die. Death here on the battlefield is honourable, and is to be preferred to want and imprisonment under the Habsburgs. War is neither the worst nor the only evil; a life of slavery is worse than death."

A difficult time dawned for the Czechoslovak forces in Russia after the Treaty of Brest-Litevsk; therefore they were declared to be a part of the French army, and were to be sent to France by way of Vladivostok. The Bolshevik government objected to this plan and, working in the interest of the Central Powers, tried to disarm the Czechoslovaks. The leaders fortunately learned in time what was going on and decided to fight their way to the Pacific in spite

of Bolshevik opposition. With admirable courage and unbelievable skill the Czechoslovak army proceeded to seize control of the whole of the trans-Siberian railroad (the Magistrála). This exploit prevented the Bolshevik government and the Central Powers from reaching the large Siberian supplies of food-stuffs and raw materials which, had they been reached, would have prolonged the war. The heroic advance of the Czechoslovak army across Russia and Siberia is unique in history.

Parallel with the formation of the Czechoslovak legions in Russia was the banding together of Czechoslovak deserters from the Austrian army and prisoners of war taken by Italy into an independent Czechoslovak army on the Italian front. Somewhat earlier Czech legions in France had been formed by volunteers, whose numbers were increased by the arrival of Czechoslovak prisoners of war from Serbia, who reached France only after great hardship and suffering. Later they were joined by legionaries from Russia, who had encircled the globe for the purpose. Even American Czechoslovaks were not lacking. These entered the American ranks after the United States entered the war in 1917. On all fronts the Czechoslovak legionaries were brave and honourable and inspired universal admiration. They were the followers of Masaryk, whose will to win had become their inspiration; they had fulfilled the prophecies of Denis that "Czech patriots, whether victorious or defeated, will leave to the world an exalted example, and will become the creditors of mankind." The deeds of the legionaries convinced the Allies that an independent Czechoslovak state would serve as a valuable support against Germany. France, Britain, and the United States recognized the National Council at Paris as the government of the future Czechoslovak state.

The Last Years of the War. Meanwhile Austria-Hungary was about to collapse. The lengthy war was exhausting its economic and financial strength, and the bonds between the various nations which composed it were becoming ever weaker. Influential circles were becoming convinced that it would be impossible to hold these nations together by force. The young Emperor was weak and vacillating by nature. He did not know how to take a firm stand against the Kaiser; his relationship to the latter was that of a mere vassal. Charles attempted to end the war in disregard of Germany, but his negotiations did not remain secret: when Germany learned what Austria was doing, the weak Emperor had to give in to the

Kaiser and continue the war. The inexperienced Charles wished to gain the confidence of his nations; therefore he convened the Imperial Council in 1917, and pardoned political prisoners. Thus Kramář, Rašín, and others regained their liberty. They were greeted at home with great rejoicing, but even this act could not buy for the Emperor the love of his non-German subjects. On the contrary, hatred of the Habsburgs grew when the public learned what horrors the Slav political prisoners had been subjected to.

All Czechs did not view the course that events had taken in the same light. Some still wished to preserve Austria at all costs. In order that this group of Austrophils should not stand against Czech interests at the Imperial Council, 130 Czech authors issued a powerful proclamation in May, 1917. They addressed themselves to the Czech delegates and pointed out that the time was drawing near in which the fate of the Czechs would be decided for centuries to come, the time when a new Europe would rise up. The Czech delegates were asked to defend the Czech point of view before the whole world. The proclamation made it clear that the union of the Czechs and the Slovaks was the universal wish. The Czech nation in general agreed with this proclamation, which was backed by the writer Alois Jirásek, and the poet Jaroslav Kvapil.

President Wilson had at the beginning of 1918 announced his *Fourteen Points*, the fourteen conditions upon which the Allies were willing to make peace with the Central Powers, who were to give up all captured territory and all imperialistic ambitions. Germany and Austria refused peace on these terms; conditions in Russia, the opening up of Russia by the Bolsheviks, tempted them to carry on.

Nothing that Austria was able to do could discourage the Czechs: neither the confiscation of the harvest and of cattle, nor the removal of historic bells (to be made into munitions), neither new drafts, nor the scarcity of food and of clothing could break their faith. Philanthropically-minded Czechs founded a society, *The Czech Heart* (České srdce), to help their neediest fellow-citizens bear the hardships and privations of war.

Representatives of all classes met at Praha on April 13, 1918, and swore that they would persist in the struggle for national independence until they won "faithful in work, in battle, in suffering, faithful to the grave!" Jirásek read the oath in the presence of representatives of the Southern Slavs. Perceiving that their

strength lay in unity, members of most of the political parties (Young Czechs, Old Czechs, Progressives, Realists, Constitutional Progressives) formed a single party — the Constitutional Democratic party. The police found this strong group most inconvenient. Today this party is that of the Czechoslovak National Democrats.

In May, the whole nation entered into the spirit of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the National Theatre; in reality, these were giant demonstrations for the independence of the Czechoslovak people.

The Prophecies of Comenius and Palacký fulfilled. The Italian, French, and Balkan fronts witnessed feverish, breathless warfare from spring until the end of October, 1918. The Serbians, supported by allied forces, after great suffering once more gathered their strength sufficiently to take the offensive. They forced back the armies of the Central Powers, especially those of the Bulgarians; so strong were their attacks, that in September, 1918, the Bulgarians were forced to surrender. The position of Austria thus became more dangerous: its power weakened, its morale was being undermined. Calls for peace could be heard on all sides: in the army and among the citizens, on the fronts and inside the country.

The government and the Emperor entered into negotiations with the Czechs and the Slovaks, and made great promises to non-Germans and non-Magyars. The love and confidence of these nations was not to be bought. The Czechs knew that their hour had struck. Dr Beneš announced to the governments of the Allies as early as September 14 that the National Council of Paris had been recognized as the temporary Czechoslovak government. On October 18, in Washington, D. C., Professor Masaryk published the Declaration of Czechoslovak Independence.

Austria and Germany expressed too late their willingness to accept Wilson's Fourteen Points; the Allies had meanwhile recognized the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris as the government of a belligerent nation. Therefore Wilson answered the Central Powers that the Czechoslovaks themselves had the right to decide as to whether they should remain within the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. At the end of October it was too late to save Austria-Hungary. Even the Magyars recalled their soldiers from the Italian front, and the hitherto hidden decay that had been destroying the Austrian army became apparent. Soldiers laid down their arms and left their posts, returning to their homes in great numbers

and in utter confusion. Many Austrian soldiers were taken prisoners of war by Italy. The destruction of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was at hand. On October 28, 1918, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hungarian Julius Andr ssy, announced to President Wilson the Dual Monarchy's willingness to recognize the right of the Czechs and the Yugoslavs (the Slavs of the South) to decide their own future.



Fig. 42. A wooden church in Subcarpathian Russia.

Praha learned of Andr ssy's step on the very morning it was taken. The people were filled with indescribable enthusiasm. Songs and rejoicing burst from all sides. Men, women, children, young and old, manual labourers and brain workers alike, all were happy. Large crowds gathered in the streets; favourite orators made speeches. The mob took down all signs bearing the Austrian eagle, that emblem of a centuries-old oppression; soldiers tore the black and yellow cockades from their caps. The military forces at Praha had received the order to occupy the main streets and squares, but the order was revoked. A National Committee formed of representatives of all political factions began to function. Ant.  vehla,

George Stříbrný, Fr. Soukup, and Vavro Šrobar headed it. The revolution had been accomplished without the shedding of a single drop of blood.

Slovakia declared itself a united state within Czechoslovakia (October 30, 1918). The actual uniting of Slovakia with Czech lands took place on November 7, 1918; Field-Marshal Foch, Commander-in-chief of the Allied Forces, ordered Magyar soldiers to evacuate the country. In agreement with the Ruthenian National Council in America (which officially represented the Ruthenians of Hungary) the north-eastern part of Hungary, Subcarpathian Russia, joined the Czechoslovak state; it was to have its own administrator (governor) and council.

The Poles of Galicia and the Roumanians of Hungary, Transylvania, and Bukovina also broke away from the old monarchy; the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenes of Austria and their compatriots formed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; its full official title *Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata a Slovenaca*, is abbreviated as *S. H. S.* (Kingdom of the Serbians, Croatians, and Slovenes). Italy annexed a slice of Southern Austria: the remainder of the old monarchy, that is the Alpine lands and a part of Western Hungary, forms the Austrian Republic, and has Vienna for its capital.

Charles I was the last Habsburg Emperor. He was forced to abdicate and to seek refuge on foreign soil. A like fate awaited Kaiser Wilhelm II, the last of the Hohenzollerns, who fled to neutral Holland.

The World War had called more than sixty million men to the battlefields; of these, twenty million were killed or died from the sufferings the war had brought; thirty million more were wounded. The Austrian monarchy lost one and a half million men, the Czechoslovaks a whole million, of which two hundred thousand were killed in action. The loss caused by the destruction or mutilation of property and historical treasures was inestimably great.

CHAPTER XI.

The Czechoslovak Republic.

The Fruits of Czechoslovak Efforts.

First Tasks. The first act of the National Committee was to take over all military and governmental administration; next, on October 29, it promulgated the first law of the new state; according to this law, all existing laws were to continue to remain valid. The last act of the Committee was the publication of the temporary Constitution, which convened the Revolutionary National Assembly. All the Czech and Slovak political parties sent their delegates to this assembly, which met on November 14. The Germans were not represented.

The First Government. The National Assembly first of all chose a government or ministry, composed of seventeen members. Dr Charles Kramář was elected Premier; Dr Ed. Beneš, who was still abroad, became the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Dr Milan Rastislav Štefánik, Minister of War, and Dr Vavro Šrobar, Minister of Public Health, were the members of the cabinet representing Slovakia.

The President. In the first session of Congress, Dr Kramář solemnly declared that the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty should never in future assert any claims to the Czech throne. The Czechoslovak state was declared a Republic, with a President at its head. Professor Thomas Garrigue Masaryk was unanimously chosen President.

The newly-elected President — a legionary — reached Praha on December 21, 1918; his arrival was a triumph, he was greeted by the whole Czech nation as a victor.

The First National Sorrow. Before six months of national independence had passed, the young state suffered a serious loss, the death of the brilliant and popular Štefánik. The airplane on which the daring aviator was flying back to his native land on May 4, 1919,

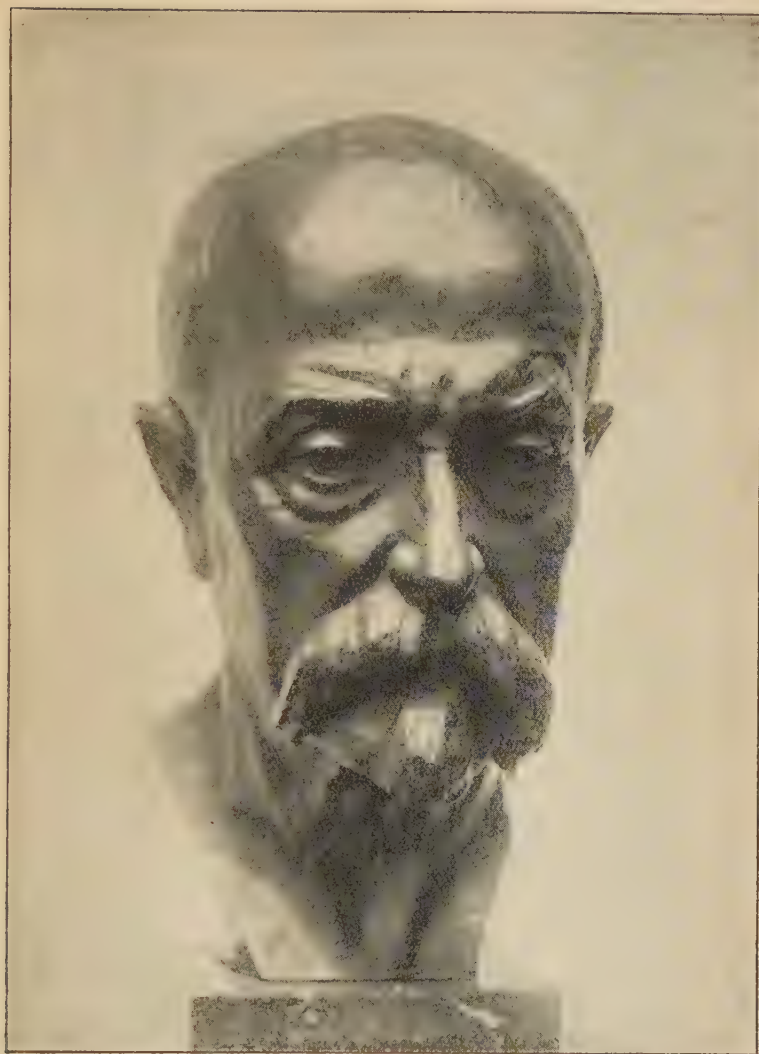


Fig. 43. T. G. Masaryk. Bust by J. Mařatka.

crashed just as it was about to land. Štefánik was instantly killed. The dead hero, who deserved much credit in the freeing of his country, was buried on the summit of Bradla, the hill that towers above Košarisky, his native village.

Peace Negotiations. The World War was concluded by peace treaties between the Allies and the Central Powers. The Czechoslovak Republic took part in these negotiations as one of the Allied states. The peace terms dealt with the question of war-guilt, stipulated reparations to be paid by the defeated Central Powers for the ravages they had done, and determined the frontiers of the newly-established states.

Czechoslovak Frontiers. The Czechoslovak Republic was represented at the Peace Conference by Beneš and Kramář. Historical boundaries between the new Republic and Germany, Austria and Hungary were established by treaties with these countries; Subcarpathian Russia was united with Czechoslovakia, which also gained a Prussian district, Hlučínsko, inhabited by Moravians, and two sections of Austrian territory, Vitorazsko (with the railroad station of Cmunt) and Valčice. Czech schools were founded in all of these newly-acquired sections, as well as in those districts of the Republic where the Czechs were in the minority.

The question of frontiers brought about strained relations between Czechoslovakia and Poland. The lands at stake were Těšínsko, Spiš, and Orava. After lengthy negotiations a settlement was reached in July, 1920. The duchy of Těšínsko, which had for hundreds of years belonged to the crown of Bohemia, was divided into two parts; the boundary passed through the heart of the city of Těšín. Czechoslovakia kept a part of the coal mines and the railroad connections with Slovakia which lay in the disputed district. During the time of the tension over Těšínsko, Slovakia was endangered by a Magyar invasion. The Hungarians retreated from the area they had occupied only upon the order of the Allies. This invasion had taken place when Bolshevist views were beginning to spread in Hungary.

New Tasks. Meanwhile the legionaries had made their way home from Siberia. Their coming, joyously hailed, was an asset to the Czechoslovak army, in the organization of which they took an important part.

The finances of the new State presented a difficult problem to the National Assembly. It was necessary to isolate the Czechoslovak

currency, which so far was common to the whole of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The first Minister of Finance, Dr Rašín, put into effect the stamping of all the bills in circulation in the Republic as the immediate measure of reform. Later these old bills were withdrawn from circulation and replaced by a new paper currency. Rašín's wise financial administration placed Czechoslovak finances on a stable footing.

New Laws. The Revolutionary National Assembly abolished the nobility, old titles and orders; it made legal the eight-hour working day. A new tax was laid on property; the burden of this tax was to be borne especially by the war profiteers. The Assembly worked out a balloting scheme which gave both men and women the right to vote and to stand as candidates.

The March of Events. Elections were held in June, 1919; they brought victory to the Socialists. Dr Kramář, belonging to the newly consolidated moderate groups, resigned, and Vlastimil Tusar, member of the Social Democratic party, became the head of the new government. The Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic was finished in Tusar's time, and published on February 29, 1920.

A National Assembly was elected on the basis of the new Constitution, in April, 1920; proportionate numbers of Germans, Magyars and Jews were elected. This Assembly carried out an important land reform. It provided for the confiscation by the government of estates exceeding 625 English acres (250 hectares) of land. The owners received a moderate compensation. Other important laws dealt with the provision for state support of the unemployed and compulsory insurance against illness by factory, agricultural, and domestic labourers. More recently, a certain amount of control over the administration of large industries has been guaranteed to labour.

Soon after the establishment of the Republic, Bolshevik ideas began to gather strength in the State, especially among the Social Democrats, who, as a result, gradually lost their unity and force. Disputes in their own ranks led to the Socialists' fall from power in September, 1920. The new cabinet was predominantly conservative and middle class. The first census of the new State was taken under this government.

The tasks of the first leaders of the Czechoslovak State were difficult and responsible ones. Certainly the new country has successfully lived through the difficulties which await every young

government. It was necessary to heal the wounds caused by war; food had to be supplied in time to alleviate the misery of the starving; a new army had to be organized, and friends among other nations had to be gained.

Dr Beneš negotiated a defensive alliance (the Little Entente), between Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Roumania. The Republic has also been represented in the League of Nations, which in its meetings at Geneva, Switzerland, is to solve all disputes between modern states, and is thus to insure universal and lasting peace.

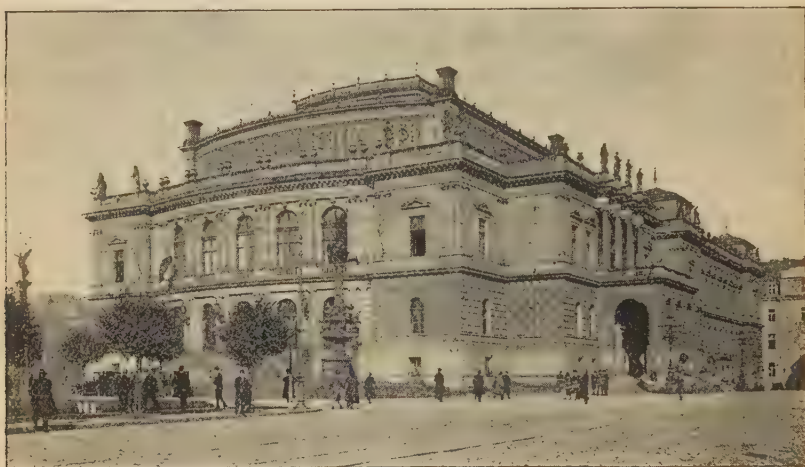


Fig. 44. The Rudolfinum, which serves today as the Czechoslovak House of Commons.

At first, the young state did not know how to economize. "Save and work" became the motto of the day; in September, 1921, various Czechoslovak parties formed a coalition, whose task it was to bring money-saving reforms to the administration. Dr Beneš became the head of the government, Dr Vavro Šrobár the Minister of Education. Soon afterwards, the whole State was excited by the news that the ex-Emperor, Charles I and his wife, Zita, had arrived in Hungary in order to seize control of the Hungarian government. The Little Entente brought its pressure to bear upon that country, so that the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty was declared ineligible to the Hungarian throne for ever. The ex-Emperor and his wife were taken to the island of Madeira, where Charles died on April 1, 1922.

Following the example of its illustrious President, the new nation shows its will to work. Fairs and various exhibitions illus-

trate the great progress that the country has made in all branches of commerce and industry. Cultural achievement in both the progressive and the formerly neglected districts of the Republic has been noteworthy. That the Republic is filled with a new life and spontaneity has been clearly shown by the splendid Sokol Rally of 1920, the Olympiad of 1921, the Exhibition of Contemporary Culture of 1928, and the activity of numerous social welfare organizations.

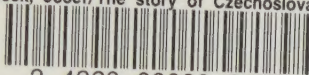
Guidance for the Czechoslovakia of the Future. The voices of the greatest men in Czechoslovak History, and the lessons that Czechoslovak History itself teaches urge us all to work. Rieger said: "In work and knowledge lies our salvation", while President Masaryk is the living example of the success brought by tireless effort, love of truth, and love of mankind. The lessons of unity and brotherly love date far back into Czechoslovak history: far in the dim past Svatopluk showed that unity is needed for strength, and this fact has been driven home to the Czechs many times during the course of the ages. The virtue of Brotherly Love, preached and lived by Hus, Chelčický, and Comenius, remains ever vital. Dr Rašín spoke with his dying breath of the lasting need for these qualities, interpreted in the light of his own intense patriotism, and his words will remain a precious legacy of the Czech nation: "It is not easy to win liberty, but it is far more difficult to keep it. If we sustain one another we shall preserve our Republic. All who love the State should unite in order to safeguard its independence. Love, not hatred, should guide the lives of us all. Our ideal should be the equality of all classes in the nation. All our national efforts should unite to work in harmony for the benefit of the whole nation. May the good of the State be our supreme law!"



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